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# The Campus



# The Campus

*A Study of Contemporary Undergraduate Life  
in the American University*

by

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New York and London  
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TO  
MOTHER AND FATHER  
MAKERS OF A HOME



## PREFACE

The present work is an attempt to study scientifically a group whose members, individually and collectively, have been receiving much attention of recent years. Our country's dependence upon the institutions of higher education for its leaders was perhaps brought to the notice of the public more forcibly during the World War than ever before. Certainly, if one may judge by the amount of space being devoted to the activities and aspirations of college youth in the press, the magazines, and current books, they form a group in whose welfare the people feel a keen interest.

This study does not deal with all students in American institutions of higher learning; their life is not uniform enough to be amenable to unified treatment. My purpose has been to consider only undergraduate life in our universities. Thus two great classes are omitted, the undergraduates in the hundreds of separate colleges throughout the United States, and all professional and graduate students. So distinct are these groups that they often have little in common with university undergraduates. If I were pressed for an exact delimitation of the field of this study, I would define an undergraduate as one who is now doing work towards a degree



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which is regularly secured four years after admission to college; and a university as an institution possessed of several schools or colleges and doing graduate work of recognized standing.

Since nothing is so fatal to truly scientific social investigation as a lack of sympathetic insight into the processes studied, I have placed chief reliance on my own experience as an active participant in undergraduate life and as a teacher who has studied undergraduates at close range for five years. To many it will seem that the fact that my personal observation has been largely confined to one institution, the University of Michigan, stamps my whole study as too narrowly based for a general treatise. Obviously it would be ideal if one person could secure intimate knowledge of undergraduate life at many universities. But, passing this as extremely difficult if not impossible, we must not jump to the conclusion that a superficial acquaintance with conditions at a number of institutions is the next best thing. Rather, much can be said for a thorough understanding of undergraduate life at one university, especially if, as here, the university happens to be generally regarded as highly typical. In the present instance, however, the precaution has been taken to have the major conclusions gone over and criticised by undergraduates or teachers in other universities. I am also encouraged to believe that my generalizations are sound by their frequent cor-

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respondence with those of John Palmer Gavit in *College*, Percy Marks in *Which Way Parnassus?*, and other writers in various books and magazines.

A criticism which I anticipate is that many assertions are made without anything to back them up in the way of statistics. My answer is simply that the attempt to reduce all social phenomena to statistical tables directs undue attention to objective factors which can be easily classified and counted, and tends to the slighting of the less tangible but more vital inner attitudes and sentiments which are the mainsprings of social life. Statistics look imposing, but they can only supplement, never replace, penetrating sympathetic insight.

It is with pleasure that I take this opportunity to acknowledge my indebtedness to the many Michigan students who have given me the benefit of their views on the various questions treated herein, to those students and professors at other universities who have been kind enough to criticise my principal conclusions, and to Dr. Randolph Adams, custodian of the Clements Library at the University of Michigan, who has read the manuscript and made many helpful suggestions. Inasmuch as Professor Charles Horton Cooley has been my chief adviser, critic, and source of encouragement since this study was initiated five years ago, my debt to him cannot be exaggerated nor my thanks too warmly expressed.

R. C. A.



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## CHAPTER I

### GENERAL CHARACTER OF UNDERGRADUATE LIFE

WHEN we speak of French life, or New York life, or undergraduate life, we are, though we may not be fully aware of it, referring to a mental unity. Frenchmen, New Yorkers, undergraduates—each group lives in a particular social situation which gives rise to common interests and problems. These are satisfied or worked out by the entire group, not as separate individuals, but as functioning members of an organic whole. This does not mean that all the individuals arrive at the same viewpoint on each issue, but simply that they are giving attention to the same things and are mutually influencing one another in the process of adjustment. The unity is one of interaction rather than agreement. There is, then, a mental aspect to undergraduate life as a whole, just as truly as there is to the life of a single undergraduate. As a particular phase of the general social process, the group exists as well as the individual.

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The most casual observation of student life will reveal, as it has to so many foreigners visiting our universities, that the general level of intellectual interest among undergraduates is low. The collective life is not characterized by intellectual curiosity and intelligent discussion. In a majority of their courses, perhaps, the undergraduates simply go through the motions of preparing their lessons, writing theses and reports, and studying for examinations. A small minority are sincerely interested in all their academic work; a larger minority do not put their hearts into any of it; while the great mass are genuinely intent upon only a few of their subjects, commonly the more practical ones, and apathetic toward the rest. Twenty hours a week of study outside the classroom is by the students' own admission a liberal average in many of our large universities.<sup>1</sup> The ambition of many—it would probably not be an exaggeration to say most—undergraduates is aptly expressed by the phrase, "getting by." Indeed, there has been for a number of years a certain element among the male students at least which considers it bad form to receive high

<sup>1</sup> Confirmed by a careful University of Chicago study. See *Report of the Faculty Student Committee on the Distribution of Students' Time* (Chicago, 1925), pp. 9-11. The average in independent colleges is perhaps slightly higher. Including classes, students at Vassar were found to average 38 hours and 20 minutes on academic work a week. See Ruth Hutchinson and Mary Connard, "What's in a College Week," *School and Society*, xxiv (1926), p. 768.

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marks, unless they are undeserved; in the latter case, the individual has "put one over" on his professor and is to be congratulated. Even when we consider those whose aim is loftier as far as marks are concerned, we do not always find the motives unimpeachable. Many make good records to whom the great fields of intellectual endeavor have little appeal. Some of these are aiming for the Phi Beta Kappa key or another such mark of distinction; others pile up high grades as a miser his gold pieces.

Not only is indifference manifested toward routine assignments, but undergraduates often fail to shake off their apathy when it comes to tasks which call for originality. Theses into which men and women are expected to put their individuality are regarded by many as just so much more drudgery. It is by no means every college student who welcomes the opportunity to show what he can accomplish when left to his own resources.

The uses to which undergraduates put their leisure time bear witness to the state of intellectual interest. Very few thought-provoking books beyond those required in academic courses are read; conversation rarely turns to the discussion of really vital topics, unless rather superficial remarks concerning the relationships between the sexes be so regarded; there is little active interest in current social and political questions; and matters of religion receive

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but scant attention. As is almost inevitable in such cases, there is a rather small self-conscious group reacting against the general trend.<sup>2</sup> Its influence is as yet slight, but some believe it to be steadily growing. In the main, there seems to be little desire for a broader and deeper understanding of life. The American undergraduate does not revel in the discovery of truth; rather, the use of his mental faculties is regarded as a more or less distasteful but necessary means to the coveted ends of high social position and pecuniary gain. The picture must not be painted too darkly however. Though the typical undergraduate is not fired with scholarly zeal himself, he has a vague respect—which is not always admiration—for knowledge and learned men. This ember, without which our liberal arts colleges would be but ashes, still lives. Though students often regard lessons as a bore and teachers as dull taskmasters, their dislike is ever tinged with the sense that, after all, their professors are representative of a force which is constantly bringing about changes in the world—scholarship. Thus the general run of undergraduates merely share vicariously in the traditional spirit of learning. To the faculty and a few serious, and therefore rather “queer,” students they leave the “insatiable thirst for knowledge of the achievements of man” which was “the great and

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps best exemplified in those editing and supporting *The New Student*.

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enduring contribution of mediaevalism to the modern world and modern education.”<sup>3</sup>

In striking contrast to the intellectual apathy of undergraduate life is the enormous interest in athletics, especially intercollegiate athletics. The exodus of undergraduates to foreign fields every time the football team plays away from home is simply the most spectacular expression of the deep-seated enthusiasm which is present a large part of the year. Campus life is shot through with interest in, and concern for, the fortunes of the teams. Not only are the spectacles enjoyed for their own sake, but it is in aiding by all possible means their representatives in the contests that most undergraduates' sense of loyalty to their Alma Mater finds its fullest expression. Victory is passionately sought. A championship attained brightens undergraduate life; frequent defeat spells discontent and criticism. Under such conditions it is no wonder that discussions relative to intercollegiate athletics consume much time and that the stars of the athletic field become the heroes of the campus, to be worshiped by every awe-inspired freshman.

Of much significance also is the great number of student organizations which flourish in the university community. There are groups which serve almost every conceivable interest or need; fraternities,

<sup>3</sup> Henry F. Osborn, "The Seven Factors of Education," *Educational Review*, xxxii (1906), p. 71.

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sororities, and house clubs; student publications; student councils; dramatic, literary, oratorical, and technical societies; glee clubs, bands, and orchestras; to say nothing of "Unions," Christian Associations, and the like. The very existence of such diversified forms of student enterprise spells an interest of no small proportions in matters outside the curriculum, but it is only those intimately acquainted with student life who can appreciate the importance which these activities hold in the undergraduate mind and the honor which is the reward of the leaders in them. The editor of the college paper, he who plays the "leading lady" in the college opera, and the president of the Student Council have, in the opinion of most students, made a success of their university careers second only to that of the football star. It is felt that these outstanding figures have proved their mettle in endeavors serviceable to their Alma Mater, endeavors which often not only require energy, pluck, and tact, but talent and resourcefulness as well.

As a general rule undergraduate life is pleasurable, even at times gay. House parties, "proms," and "bonfire nights" are the most obvious indications of a joyous—I had almost said holiday—spirit. One is prepared for the genial good nature, the amiable banter, and the general optimism prevalent on the campus, though this latter is perhaps remarkable when one realizes the difficulties many

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students encounter in trying to support themselves. But the frequency with which automobile rides, "shows," moving pictures, and dances are indulged in by a great proportion of the student body is truly astonishing. Men and women are liked who contribute most to the pleasure of their companions; and some of these have few more substantial qualities than being easy "mixers." Most sins are pardoned if one is a good fellow; no other virtues can quite atone for the lack of this one.

Undergraduates are also ultra-modern. There is a sophistication about their conversation, a fashionableness about their clothes, an air almost of condescension toward their elders, which often sets heads of greater experience to shaking. University men and women in our day are sure of themselves and of the age in which they live. Believing that they understand modern life better than their parents or teachers, they think that they should be allowed to run their own ship in their own way. Nothing perhaps reflects this attitude so well as their standards of propriety. They feel that chaperonage is a useless relic of a by-gone day; that women should smoke if they want to; that men and women who have attained any degree of intimacy should freely discuss matters of sex; that "petting" is comparatively harmless; and that immorality, even on the part of a well-bred woman, though to be severely censured, is not irretrievably damning.

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Throughout undergraduate life there is a spirit of conformity in matters of speech, dress, the employment of one's time, and, in certain cases, belief. As long as the individual does not differ from the established mode in outward characteristics and does not advance ideas in opposition to the usual assumptions with regard to university life, he may think about as he pleases. But he keeps within these limits. To appear greatly interested in one's studies or to admit that one has put much time on them is bad form. So too is the casting of aspersions on the system of intercollegiate athletics. It is distinctly good form to dress in the prevailing style, to talk as if "getting by" were one's standard of success in scholarship, and, if one has spare time, to employ oneself in extra-curricular activities rather than to sit quietly reading a good book.

Seemingly, but not actually, opposed to this spirit of conformity are a certain breadth of view and tolerance among students in respect to the larger issues of life. It is largely a case of outward appearance and overt action contrasting with inner opinion or sentiment. In matters of opinion students are passively, almost indifferently, tolerant. They care little for the theory of race, religion, or political creed, but obvious distinctions such as mark off the Negro or the Jew may lead to social snobbery.

A phase of university life that is not always

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appreciated by outsiders is that a considerable proportion of students do remunerative work, mostly of a rather menial character, in order to help pay their expenses. In the face of what has been said concerning the lack of genuine intellectual interest, this may seem somewhat of a paradox. But the truth is clear. A college career with all its glamour and its social prestige is the object often sought, not necessarily the well-rounded development of the mind. Many lead a life of real hardship who have no deep intellectual interest.

\* \* \*

When viewed largely, undergraduate life appears confused and poorly integrated. Although certain institutions like fraternities, athletics, and student publications are firmly established, each leads a relatively separate existence, not finding its place in an inclusive social pattern. The different groups with different interests develop in their peculiar ways, often working at cross purposes with one another. The situation is recognized by many faculty members, and to some degree by students, but there is lacking the public will so necessary to a speedy remedy.

In this confused state, fraternities, sororities, and other compact groups exercise a power in student affairs out of proportion to their importance because of their well-disciplined organization. There being



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no general standards to which all adhere, such groups further their own relatively narrow interests at the expense of the remainder of the student body. The "independent" or "barb" is almost as incapable of affecting undergraduate policy as is the ordinary handworker of influencing the country's foreign policy in the face of well-organized associations of bankers and manufacturers.

Evidence of the unintegrated character of undergraduate life is furnished by the paucity of real leaders in many universities, notably the larger ones. There are not enough matters of universal concern in these less compact bodies for significant individuality to assert itself in any wide sphere. There are many men and women prominent in particular activities, as the publications or dramatics, who are admired by their fellows for what they have accomplished, but little general weight is given their opinions on this account. The athlete probably attracts the most attention and is idolized more than any other; not as a personality in most cases, but as a skilled performer. There may be the tendency to ape him in obvious ways, and the desire to shine in his reflected glory, but after all true leadership requires a greater hold on one's following.

The collective thought of which undergraduate life is the expression may, then, be epitomized as a loosely knit whole, shallow in character, but fresh and independent in outlook. This condition is

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natural to a time of change. When an old way of doing things is discredited and new tendencies arise, there is for some time no depth or maturity to the collective life because the whole is not well enough integrated to serve as a basis for thorough individual or group development. In this way we may explain the undergraduate's interest in the immediately stimulating or practical rather than the ultimately vital, his self-assurance and initiative in particular spheres, and the lack of general coherence.

## CHAPTER II

### THE ROOTS OF CONTEMPORARY CONDITIONS

THE common body of thought among undergraduates has a history of its own. Its development, like that of any other social form, is a tentative growth. It tries to move onward in the direction of its existing tendencies, always groping about for useful material from its environment. But in this very process its tendencies are gradually modified by the action of the surrounding life. There is a constant assimilation and survival of those ideas which seem to meet the contemporary situation adequately and the dropping off of those which have become poorly adapted.

Undergraduate thought is now in a period of disorganization. This means that because of certain changes in contemporary life the former unifying forces or tendencies have lost their fitness to present conditions. The collective thought is, as it were, feeling around for a new adaptation, putting forth shoots in various directions with the hope of working out a fresh principle of organization. Though still an evolutionary process, the development is at one of those critical stages when the element of con-

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tinuity in the social whole is at a minimum, the element of change at a maximum.

It seems obvious that undergraduate thought must remain disorganized so long as there is a lack of intellectual interest. Nothing else can properly unify this whole except the need which brings the students to the university. Intercollegiate athletics sometimes seem capable of weaving undergraduate life together, but their influence upon the great mass is superficially emotional rather than vital. As long as undergraduates leave the preservation of that great contribution of the Middle Ages and of the medieval universities, the consecration of learning, to faculty members, professional students, and a mere handful of their own number, their collective life will remain disorganized. The present situation may be likened to a mural decoration painted, while the master lies ill, by enthusiastic but immature pupils. Portions of the work are well done, but each part is without relation to the whole. Symmetry, balance, the sense of composition are missing. Some figures stand out prominently, seeming to monopolize the attention of the observer, while others do not receive the emphasis that is due them. Side issues bulk large in the panorama of undergraduate life, because the master, intellectual interest, is indisposed.

This disorganization in student thought is a result of the unprecedented social changes which

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have occurred in America during the past seventy-five years. If an adult contemporary of Abraham Lincoln, outdoing Rip Van Winkle, should awaken after napping for three quarters of a century, he would find it almost impossible to adapt himself to modern life. This period, the greatest in the history of the world as far as invention, economic development, and scientific advance go, has completely altered men's activities and points of view. Only those traditions which were either too fundamental to be touched by the changes or so flexible that they could adapt themselves to unaccustomed conditions have survived. Most bodies of collective thought have been thrown into a state of disorganization, that of undergraduates along with the rest. The comparatively well-integrated college life, dominated by intellectual interest, which was to be found in America prior to the Civil War was a product of a relatively stable and mature social organization.<sup>1</sup> When that organization was upset, the old undergraduate life became ill adapted and began to disintegrate. In the resulting confusion the standards of the general life have been borne in upon the campus, a process which has been facilitated by the

<sup>1</sup> Some will perhaps question that there ever has been a stable and mature social organization in America. I do not mean that American life in the days before the Civil War was crystallized and unchanging, but rather that it was in a state of moving equilibrium; that the same sort of slow change was going on which had been going on for some time and that institutions had become well adjusted to it.

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rapid "turnover" of undergraduates. Student life is always particularly susceptible to outside influences because of the annual influx of those with fresh points of view and the complementary exodus of those best acquainted with the traditions. Lacking the bulwark against the onslaughts of alien influences which a strong intellectual interest would afford, undergraduate life has become almost a replica of that beyond the academic pale.

\* \* \*

Haste is one of the outstanding characteristics of twentieth-century civilization in America. Our mental life has been speeded up by the enormous increase of stimuli which improved means of communication such as the telegraph, the telephone, the radio, and the daily newspaper have brought with them. The horizon of the individual is now almost world-wide and the natural tendency under the circumstances is to attempt the understanding of it all. Moreover, we are kept in a state of nervous tension by the consciousness of rapid physical movement all about us. The railroad, the fast steamboat, the street car, the automobile, and the airplane surround the child with a current of speed to which his senses soon become attuned. From the baby's first glimpse of motor cars whizzing past the window to the time of youthful "joy rides" through the countryside, all is rapid movement. His father's haste to get off to

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business in the morning, the mental tests in school, the scorn with which his fellows regard a "slow" boy—these and many other facts of the growing youngster's daily existence educate him to the idea of speed. Once infected with the germ the energy of youth carries it to extremes. The most reckless automobile drivers are less than twenty-one.

Undergraduates are particularly susceptible to the spirit of haste because a disproportionate number of them come from the urban communities<sup>2</sup> where this spirit is at its height. Street cars, crowded thoroughfares, hurrying delivery autos, and, in the case of the larger cities, elevated and subway trains, roller coasters, and the throngs from the business district bustling to and from lunch have worked upon their nerves.

Hastiness in mental activity breeds superficiality. Our people are so intent on absorbing all of the ideas which come flooding in on them that they do not go deep anywhere. The daily newspaper, with its headlines designed to give hurried readers the gist of events, encourages them to secure a smattering of all the news and a real knowledge of none of it. Perhaps that part of our pioneer heritage which we call the spirit of individualism makes each man feel that he must keep abreast of the times in every field lest he cease to be self-reliant and able to take advantage of life's opportunities. Nor do

<sup>2</sup>See Appendix I, Table A.

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our schools and colleges succeed in inculcating a different principle. The students obtain a little knowledge of many fields but are rarely led to a vital understanding of any one of them. Thus they have still to learn concentration, lacking which they jump from one interest to another.

Much the same conditions which are producing haste in our life are developing in our children a love of excitement. "Youth feels the tingle of life at a vast number of points, the stimulus of change, variety, the not-yet-experienced."<sup>3</sup> Pleasures which satisfied the adventurous spirit of their elders seem tame to these moderns. Our whole civilization is pitched in a higher emotional key which requires shriller notes to startle the audience. Thrilling forms of recreation and entertainment have been institutionalized in professional athletics, automobile races, public dances, and amusement parks. Not only is excitement easily obtained but the craving for it is increased. It is probable that conditions incidental to the World War augmented the desire for excitement already existing. Young men going overseas, perhaps to die, wished to crowd as much pleasure as possible into their few hours of leave. Civilians, working overtime and worried about loved ones, tried to find relief for their jaded nerves in riotous entertainment. Young

<sup>3</sup>George A. Coe, *What Ails Our Youth?* (New York, 1925), p. 3.



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and old felt a strain which they tried to forget in emotionally powerful activity.

\* \* \*

Commercialism in the sense of an undue preoccupation with the production, appropriation, and consumption of material things is another characteristic of modern America. The immense natural resources of our land and the constant improvements in methods of utilizing them have held out such prospects of wealth to our countrymen that they have quite naturally devoted themselves to industrial development. With all the world turning its energies toward commercial pursuits, the nation possessing the greatest potentialities in this sphere could hardly be expected to do otherwise. Moreover, there was in this country no well-established cultural tradition to oppose the tendency. The necessity of conquering the continent, the shifting character of the population, the constant influx of immigrants, the relatively low degree of family pride, and the shallowness of our institutions of secondary education have all been hostile to the development of a strong cultural organization.

Commercialism is at the bottom of an unfortunate trait which, for want of a better name, we may call externalism. The American devotion to the immediately "practical" has led to a lack of concern for the truly vital aspects of life. The average

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citizen is not even superficially interested in social reform, international politics, and art. He looks up to men of economic power such as railroad magnates and large manufacturers, dreams of emulating them some day, and regards the scholar as an uninteresting recluse. When he takes his mind from business, he is likely to feel the need of complete mental relaxation, and so he seeks refuge in sports, amusements, and avocations, especially those in which little intellectual effort is required.

The failure of most American parents to take a serious interest in their children's mental growth tends to give the young a wrong attitude toward the vital things of life. What a contrast with the situation in Germany during Münsterberg's youth! "The teachers were silently helped by the spirit which prevailed in our homes with regard to the school work. The school had the right of way; our parents reënforced our belief in the work and our respect for the teachers. A reprimand in the school was a shadow in our home life; a word of praise in the school was a ray of sunshine in the household." <sup>4</sup> Nowadays the parents, distracted by other duties and absorbed in their own pleasures, turn the larger share of the task of education over to the schools; and the children do not find the learning process adventurous enough to compete with the more colorful pursuits at hand.

<sup>4</sup> Hugo Münsterberg, *American Traits* (Boston, 1902), p. 56.

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One might suppose, however, that, though a lack of intellectual interest is characteristic of American school children as a whole, our university students were a select few whose very enrollment indicated a background of culture. Though a reasonable assumption on *a priori* grounds, this view has recently received many hard knocks. An eminent literary critic remarks: "Our teaching is sown upon a bare and barren hinterland, where, finding no soil to root in, it dries up and blows away."<sup>5</sup> To much the same effect is the statement of another writer that "now when all classes come to college, the college must give the active, positive background which in former generations was prepared for it outside. It must create the intellectual stomach as well as prepare the food."<sup>6</sup> This situation is partly due to the less respectful attitude toward a university education. The sons of those in the upper economic class have come to take it for granted. They do not feel that they are especially fortunate; many of them think of a college career as a pleasant four-year holiday. Even among those from less well-to-do homes the motives are not always of the best. Probably the majority are aiming to increase their earning power in later life; many to secure social prestige; some to distinguish themselves in

<sup>5</sup> Henry Seidel Canby, *College Sons and College Fathers* (New York, 1915), p. 28.

<sup>6</sup> Randolph Bourne, *Education and Living* (New York, 1917), p. 234.

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athletic and campus activities. A burning desire for knowledge is relatively infrequent.

Not so long ago "the education of a gentleman" consisted in a familiarity with foreign languages, history, literature, philosophy, and pure science. Those who wished to become members of the nation's élite desired a cultural rather than an immediately practical education. Now all is changed. The ascendancy of the captains of industry has almost destroyed the desire for refined taste and appreciation. An expert technician who is also a "good mixer" is the model after which most students are patterning themselves.

The lack of a cultural background was clearly shown by facts obtained recently from an unselected group of male matriculants at a large middle-western university. Six per cent of these men had read no magazines regularly in the two years before coming to the university; 35 per cent had read only the lightest sort of fiction periodicals; only 12 per cent had read any literary or critical magazines such as the *Atlantic*, *Bookman*, *Century*, or *Nation*.<sup>7</sup> Nor was their book reading more indicative of intellectual interest. More than half read less than twenty books in the year before coming to the university and the great majority of these were light fiction.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> For complete figures, see Appendix I, Table B.

<sup>8</sup> See Appendix I, Table C.

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It seems probable, despite all this, that university men and women come from more stimulating environments than the average. There are almost no students from the most ignorant families, and the cultured homes are well represented. The families of many undergraduates seem often to encourage socially valuable self-expression, for about one-quarter of the freshmen interviewed had some sort of literary or artistic hobby.<sup>9</sup> Even where interest in the finer things of life is absent, there is not a little understanding of contemporary conditions. The fathers are usually business men who are shrewd observers of the course of events. Moreover, many students do summer-time work which brings them into sympathy with points of view previously foreign to them.<sup>10</sup>

It is rather interesting to notice that the intellectual interests and the hobbies of entering students are strikingly uniform in the different social classes. The wealthy seem to have the same tastes as the poor; the Pennsylvanians, as those from Minnesota; the city boys, as the farmers' sons. Even the education of the parents seems to have but scant effect, for those whose fathers are college graduates make no better showing than those whose parents are not graduates. This is partly due to the fact that there is selection in the latter group. Almost all

<sup>9</sup> See Appendix I, Table D.

<sup>10</sup> For types of work done by students, see Appendix I, Table E.

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sons of college fathers are sent to college no matter how indifferent their intellectual promise. When the mother is a college graduate the home environment appears to be sufficiently stimulating because of her close contact with her children to overcome this selective factor, for students from such homes make the best showing.<sup>11</sup>

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The prodigious bustle of American life, though far from salutary in most respects, denotes a degree of activity found in few other peoples. As a nation we are alert and resourceful. Foreigners may scoff at our mad pursuit of the dollar, but they must admire the energy of the pursuers. Whether the selective influence of pioneer conditions, the stimulating climate, or the absence of rigid social stratification is chiefly responsible for this trait, there can be no doubt of its effectiveness in rearing a vast social structure in a comparatively short time. Indeed, we are often said to have a talent for organization.

<sup>11</sup> For figures on the relation of the education of parents to the number of books read, see Appendix I, Table F. Tables showing the relation of the education of parents to kind of magazines read, the relation of the automobile investment of the family to the number of books and the kind of magazines read, the relation of the size of the home community to the number of books and the kind of magazines read, and the relation of the geographical location of the home to these same facts were omitted either because they showed no marked trends or were too unwieldy for reference use.

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Whatever Americans have failed to do in the way of finer creative work, many believe they have made up in their capacity for carrying out great enterprises. This resourcefulness, so obvious in connection with the campus activities of the undergraduate, has been remarked even in the field of statecraft to which the American is so unaccustomed. "While the typical European statesman proves hopelessly inadequate when faced by novel and unanticipated tasks and situations, this is not characteristically true of American statesmen. During the rapid development of the United States in the nineteenth century, its public men faced many extraordinary emergencies. Most of these leaders were persons of mediocre ability. Nevertheless, in nearly every case they dealt competently with the problem thrust upon them, and no one of them completely lost his mental or ethical equilibrium."<sup>12</sup>

Our talent for organization has combined with our emphasis on externals and the break-up of the old neighborhood group to create a veritable "joining habit." Some one has said that whenever four Americans foregather one is chosen president, another vice-president, a third secretary, and the last treasurer. We have the capacity for forming organizations; we need the companionship formerly secured in the neighborhood; but, perhaps above all,

<sup>12</sup> Dr. Hermann Lufft, "American and European Statesmen Compared," *Living Age*, cccxxiv (1925), p. 238.

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we have an intense desire to belong to prestige-giving groups. Lacking titles of nobility or other badges of distinction, we are prone to seek it through membership in societies. Modern communication has rendered participation in such groups easy. Most university students have been reared in business and professional families<sup>13</sup> which have the necessary leisure and wealth. The children, brought up to regard membership in a Masonic order or a woman's club proper for their parents, frequently form societies of their own.

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Perhaps the most fundamental difference between the young people of to-day and those of yesterday is a growing sense of independence of all that is old or traditional. Twentieth-century children feel confidence in their ability to deal with the problems of life and a corresponding scorn for customary patterns of behavior. Where our ancestors accepted the manners, moral ideas, and philosophy of life of their elders with but slight question, modern children rebel.

The sense of independence is developing, in the first place, because the play group is increasing its influence at the expense of the family. The establishment of playgrounds, municipal bathing beaches,

<sup>13</sup> For occupations of parents of undergraduates, see Appendix I, Table G.



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great park systems, and men's and women's Christian Associations, the organization of the Boy Scouts, the Campfire Girls, and other such bodies, and the gradual building up of the cult of athletics in America have united with the loosening of home ties and the lessening in the number of home interests to increase the child's participation in the play group. A quiet evening in the family circle talking, reading, or playing games is a rare exception in modern American life. Parents as well as children find their amusement elsewhere after the evening meal. And in the daytime the help of the boys and girls is no longer required about the house so that they run out to play with their fellows, usually, for lack of other space, in a public park or playground. Moreover, the rise of institutions like the Boy Scouts specifically designed for young people has given the latter a sense that they are sharers in "real life," and they no longer mimic so much the ways of the grown-ups. The self-reliance of the children is increased. Lacking the companionship with their elders which other generations enjoyed, they are thrown on their own resources.

Not only is the family surrendering much of its influence to the play group, but it is exercising the remainder with less regard for the customs of the past. A time of rapid social change has destroyed many traditions. For adults as well as children, the guides to conduct come largely from con-

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temporary life. The parents are frequently less capable of adjusting the family to the new situation than are the children, for they must rid themselves of much mental baggage now out-of-date. When an automobile is to be bought, a summer holiday planned, or a room redecorated, the young people are consulted. This accession of power to the children has been in no small degree responsible for the spirit of independence of which "flapperism" and the new moral code of youth are expressions. Young people believe that, since their elders seem unable to give them a workable, modern code, they must adopt one of their own making.

Working in conjunction with the spirit of independence to produce the modernness of undergraduate life is the undue influence of the cities, those centers of new ideas. In the first place, there is a disproportionately large percentage of students from urban environments; and, secondly, these city dwellers exercise a disproportionately large force in shaping campus life. They become the leaders in the student community and set the pace for the rest. Men and women from large urban high schools or the city-bred graduates of fashionable preparatory schools usually have a wide circle of acquaintances in a university when they arrive; whereas those from villages or rural districts may know but one or two others. The city dwellers adjust themselves more easily to the new environment; they are more

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likely to be asked to join prestige-giving fraternities and sororities; they receive the helping hand of friends much oftener than their comrades from the smaller places; and they can participate more freely in the student social life because they have more money.<sup>14</sup> Those not so fortunate, eager to become well known and alert to take advantage of every opportunity, quickly adopt the dress, the manners, and the points of view of those obviously better equipped to achieve a conventional success in college life.

\* \* \*

A certain amount of rather narrow-minded conformity accompanies the American emphasis on the immediate and the obvious. Knowing that our fellows are more concerned with the external aspect of our lives than with our true individuality, we try too much to please the whims of others and do not attend enough to building up a stable, consistent personality. "We love to be like others; to wear what they wear, eat what they eat, cut our hair as they cut theirs, ride in automobiles as they ride, bathe in the same type of enameled bath tubs, listen-in on the same concerts, and be buried in identical cemeteries."<sup>15</sup> Were inner worth better appreciated there would be more striving after

<sup>14</sup> See Appendix I, Table H.

<sup>15</sup> Cornelia James Cannon, "Quantity Production in Ideas," *Atlantic Monthly*, cxxxvi (1924), p. 382.

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unique development. As it is, Americans of all classes tend to fall in line and seek obvious, external goals.

In some cases the spirit of conformity may, peculiarly enough, gain added strength on a college campus because of the institution's social prestige. With regard to those obvious qualities by which a student is judged, the consciousness of his position on a relatively high social plane induces him to fall in line so as to keep well within the charmed circle. He is afraid that the slightest peculiarity on his part will exclude him. Then too, the freshman coming to a university where he is eager to be socially accepted, lacks self-confidence and becomes a scrupulous conformer to the prevailing customs. Though he usually attains maturity and a critical attitude before graduation, he is still apt to question only new suggestions, seldom reconsidering accepted notions.

The youthful spirit of independence, paradoxically enough, increases conformity. The sense that they are breaking away from the traditional ways of doing things breeds in the members of the rising generation a strong feeling of solidarity. Just as a group of pioneers, cut off from their former homes, must depend more than ever upon each other, so twentieth-century young people, having abandoned the standards of their elders, must rely on those sanctioned by their own group. Apparently this

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break with the past has developed a militant attitude among the rebelling element and an exaggerated pride in their own ways. This leads to conformity of the strictest sort lest others of their group cry "traitor."

In the realm of thought there is great conformity. Perhaps the explanation of this is to be sought in our history. Born just in time to lead in the greatest era of material progress yet experienced, the United States has never become really stable. To the unsettled conditions of a new country have been added the unsettling economic changes and scientific discoveries of the past century. It is small wonder that Americans, trying to hold their heads above the flood, have snatched whatever straws were within their reach. Their material world altered beyond recognition, their dogmatic religion slipping from their grasp, they have clung tenaciously to whatever ideas were left. Accepted beliefs, not challenged by the changes, have gained strength. The notion, for instance, that there was the least shadow of justice on the British side in the pre-revolutionary controversies does not please the average American. The moral strenuousness of our times also breeds conformity. So many new problems confront us daily that our energy is consumed in revolving them in the light of our already accepted ideas. We are unable to work out new standards, or to alter old beliefs.

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Undergraduates do, however, escape much of this general narrowness of belief. Such enlargement of mind has always been an accompaniment of the academic life. The knowledge assimilated in university courses increases the meaning and significance of life and broadens one's sympathies. Each step along the pathway leading up the mountain of knowledge enlarges the climber's horizon, unless his gaze becomes too firmly fixed on one view. The mingling with men and women of other localities, other social classes, and even other races is also of incalculable benefit. The student learns to appreciate new points of view; he sees life not through his own eyes or those of his "set" alone, but through the eyes of many of his university acquaintances as well. Not all of student tolerance, however, is due to a desire to hear the evidence. Ignorance and indifference with respect to religious and political questions have much to do with their open-mindedness in these fields.

\* \* \*

European visitors have always been struck by the good humor of Americans. Cheerfulness in the present, and optimism for the future have been pronounced traits among our people since colonial days. The bounty of nature, at least until the country was completely settled, the youth of the nation and the people's faith in its manifest destiny,

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the success of our democratic institutions when many predicted failure, the growth of our industry and commerce—all these have made Americans proud of their country, and of themselves as makers of it. A steadily rising standard of living has perhaps been most influential in rendering our people contented and confident that the future has only good in store.

Optimism is particularly prevalent among our university students because, though not drawn from an aristocratic class as are most of their English cousins at Oxford and Cambridge, they come largely from well-to-do families. If the father of a student is a handworker, he is almost invariably one of the more prosperous members of his class. The presence of a man or woman in a university usually indicates that the family is comparatively wealthy, for even those who work at college commonly require assistance from home. Confirmation of this is furnished by the fact that the automobile investment of the average student's family is from two to two and one-half times as great as that of the average family in the same locality.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, the number of students' parents who rent their homes is only about one-fourth the average.<sup>17</sup> Students as a class are apparently not extremely wealthy, however, for the great majority of their families employ

<sup>16</sup> See Appendix I, Table I.

<sup>17</sup> See Appendix I, Table J.

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no servants;<sup>18</sup> and five-sixths of the students themselves have worked during the summer.<sup>19</sup>

Other factors, such as the absence of arbitrary control and the lack of family and business responsibilities, contribute to a care-free existence, even where economic security is not present. Some have to borrow money to pay their tuition, approximately one-third work regularly during the school year, and the majority help to earn their way by summer employment, but very few appear discouraged or seem to be afraid that they cannot meet their obligations. This is evidenced by the popularity among students of expensive moving-picture shows, the throngs who attend public dances, the number who go to out-of-town football games, and the uniformly well-dressed appearance of undergraduates.

This relative prosperity means that these young men and women have been free from onerous responsibility and have enjoyed an exceptional share of life's advantages. Their contact with misery, vice, or, indeed, with any of the social problems facing this generation has been meager. When they have had such contact, their fathers, who generally possess the point of view of the employing classes,<sup>20</sup> have minimized the evils of the existing order, so that the children have remained but mildly interested in them, if not completely ignorant. Inciden-

<sup>18</sup> See Appendix I, Table K.

<sup>19</sup> See Appendix I, Table E.

<sup>20</sup> See Appendix I, Table G.



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tally, this has tended to keep intellectual interest at its present low ebb. If our universities received men and women mainly from the most cultured families on the one hand, or from the poorer classes on the other, we should probably find a real desire for learning, because of a keen realization of the necessity for solving contemporary problems. As it is, most of our students come from a class of families having none too great intellectual curiosity and, above all, from a group which is eminently satisfied with things as they are and which registers a vehement and uncritical protest against any change in the existing order. It is small wonder that the sons and daughters have not realized the need for constructive thinking.

## CHAPTER III

### LEARNING

WE have seen that there is a lack of intellectual interest in undergraduate life and that this is a product of the disorganization and the accompanying externalism of our times. From the result on the one hand, and the generalized or basic cause on the other, attention will now be shifted to the forces that can be observed working immediately in undergraduate life.

In contrast to the common body of student thought, there is a body of faculty thought which has not been so greatly affected by the confusion of American life. Being members of a profession made intensely conscious of its standards by learned societies and faculty organizations, having been trained long in the academic institution, leading a life of relative isolation, and concerned chiefly with the more vital aspects of nature and human life, these men have fostered a collective thought which is suffering little from disorganization. There is development, but the changes are in most cases wrought slowly, and new ideas are grafted successfully to the existing trunk.

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Thus we have the convergence of two streams of thought in the liberal arts college: the well organized, more obviously traditional current borne by the faculty, and the confused, relatively undeveloped one carried by the students. In this respect the college is not unlike the training camp of the Foreign Legion. Raw recruits drawn from all parts of the world, with little or no military training, are brought into contact with well disciplined officers and sergeants who have all the traditions of the French army behind them. We know the result of this convergence as far as undergraduate life in our large American universities is concerned. Not given the power over their subordinates that military men possess, the professors cannot enforce the acceptance of their point of view. Undergraduate life goes gayly on with slight influence as far as fundamental values go from the well organized, tradition-steeped stream of faculty thought. The two currents in university life run parallel, but barely mingle.

The failure of the students to respond more readily to intellectual stimulation is in some measure due to the personality and point of view of the faculty. No one can deny that professors are interested in their fields of study; but many believe that frequently they have little ability in, or enthusiasm for, imparting their knowledge and interest to immature undergraduates. Many professors have

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devoted themselves so completely to research in some narrow field that they have not the familiarity with present-day realities which must form the basis for sympathetic contact. The teaching of such men is apt to be dry, pedantic, boring. The energy which is required to inspire their classes with intellectual enthusiasm has been consumed in conning musty tomes. To undergraduates, unable to feel any admiration for such specialists, the intellectual life appears anything but interesting or romantic. Fortunately, many eminent research men are also excellent teachers.

In seeking the immediate causes for the lack of development of intellectual interest, consideration must be given to the institutional forms such as curricular arrangements, classroom procedure and the like. The general framework which arose out of the needs of the twelfth-century situation, comprising such things as the corporate form of organization, the division into faculties and the definite curricula of subjects, tested by examination and leading to degrees,<sup>1</sup> has come to us practically intact, for it is easily adaptable to changes in content. The pattern has become so standardized that it can hardly be said to be the object of active faculty, and certainly not of student, thought. Yet it is interesting to note that much of the contem-

<sup>1</sup> Charles H. Haskins, *The Rise of Universities* (New York, 1923), p. 35.

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porary increase in the number of "practical" courses—those which have an immediate and obvious bearing upon the problem of making a living—is due to the unwitting influence of undergraduates who come with mercenary rather than cultural motives. Indeed, the development in the more institutional phases of the university has been slow and largely blind. Progress has been by a method of groping rather than one of clear-sighted intelligence. There has been a general tendency toward formalism, the clinging to the shell for its own sake long after the animating spirit has departed. Things have been allowed to drift along until the maladaptation became so obvious that all who ran might read. Unlike most American institutions at the present time, the university system is but little disorganized. Forces which in a less well grounded institution would produce disorganization are being directed into the old channels, increasing formalism usually and only occasionally forcing the establishment of new forms. The intellectual indifference of many students is partly due to estrangement between the institution and the undergraduate. The latter all too often feels that the university is strangling itself with red tape in the way of pedagogical and accounting machinery. The seat of the trouble is the prodigious increase in size without accompanying provisions for the "humanizing" of the system. "Great numbers have laid education under

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necessity. They have compelled close organization, and organization means mechanics, and mechanics means artificiality.”<sup>2</sup> The freshman throngs which yearly besiege our campuses require large classes, formal testing of knowledge, credit by hours, grading systems, absence reports, warnings and probation—things which contribute nothing toward making education more vital.

With their unprecedented growth our universities have found it difficult to maintain the quality of the teaching staff and the proper ratio of students to faculty members. The almost inevitable outcome of this situation has been the widespread use of large lecture classes. Not only is a lecture the only practicable method of dealing with a large group when there is but one instructor available, but there is great demand for the courses given by the more eminent professors. Though the continuity of thought secured by lectures is not to be despised, and though they are invaluable where the material for study can only be found in widely scattered sources, their use is, more frequently than not, disadvantageous because of the apathy toward the subject which lectures engender. It is difficult for undergraduates to feel that they are being given a chance to express themselves when intellectual food is doled out to them without their having an opportunity to react

<sup>2</sup> Grant Showerman, “Intellect and the Undergraduate,” *School and Society*, xiii (1921), p. 241.

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critically toward it. A passive, receptive attitude is thus encouraged. Undergraduates might conceivably keep their minds alert during a lecture in order to understand the material being presented and work it in with what they have already studied, but the fact is that they seldom do so unless quiz sections accompany the lecture. Even then they do not always do it. It takes an inspiring teacher, one who speaks well and has an attractive personality in addition to command of his subject, to make a lecture stimulating. When there are no quiz sections, there is the further disadvantage that the students do not become well acquainted with one another and hence there is little discussion of the subject outside the classroom. The importance of such discussion cannot be overestimated. It is like a number of ships trying to make out the character of some floating object. When all play their searchlights upon it, illuminating it from every angle, each captain is better able to see its true significance.

The extensive use of lectures is undoubtedly responsible for criticisms like the following: "It [university education] concentrates on the acquisition of certain facts rather than on the acquisition of knowledge as a whole. It crams the student with meaningless information which he is unable to integrate alone. Facts are dealt out to students like groceries and dry goods to customers but, unlike

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such purchasers, students do not know what to do with them when they get them.”<sup>3</sup>

A high student-faculty ratio militates against the development of intellectual interest in many other ways. Because professors cannot judge students' progress by personal contact and because they have to pass on the fitness of so many, they resort to mechanical and external modes of conducting their courses. Rote memory is often emphasized rather than real mastery of the subject; a fixed number of pages of outside reading per week is required; examinations which are easy to correct but which fail to test the student's underlying grasp of the material are given; and laboratory work has to be highly organized, with set experiments written up in specified ways, and original experiment frowned upon. Quiz instructors, if their sections are large, must fight against following the line of least resistance, against turning the class hour into a dull routine of question and answer. Under such circumstances it is extremely difficult to arouse the students' powers of analysis and judgment, to encourage them to give voice to ideas and opinions, often irrelevant, but nevertheless original. Moreover, the undergraduates find it difficult, even when they so desire, to secure much intimate contact with faculty members who are, after all, about the only

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Collins, *The Doctor Looks at Love and Life* (New York, 1926), p. 267.



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ones who could lead them away from the haste, superficiality, and commercialism in which they have been trained. Wherever the teachers do exert a personal influence on students they tend to direct interest toward things conducive to true individuality, like scholarship and participation in literary, scientific, and oratorical activities, rather than toward those which offer transient and inconsequential power and renown. But the number of men and women thus benefited is small.

The background of the student, the body of faculty thought, and the institutional forms that are prevalent are not the sole causes of the failure of our universities to develop a love for learning in their undergraduates. The body of student thought itself is a powerful factor. There has been built up a tradition of apathy towards study and a corresponding interest in various other matters. The relative wealth of students has enabled most of them to patronize theaters and dances, and many of them to have the use of automobiles. Such amusements have become customary so that it is difficult for an individual to escape indulging in them if he has the means. Furthermore, such traditional extra-curricular activities as intercollegiate athletics, student publications, "college operas," and all the rest give a stability and permanence to the externalism of the undergraduates which it would otherwise lack. It is easier to conform than to become schol-

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arly even though one may have a secret inclination to the latter course. Once started in such activities it is very difficult to withdraw, so that even those who come to realize that they are budgeting their time inadvisedly are unable to reapportion it.

A professor has recently suggested that undergraduates are intellectually apathetic because half of them "don't think—can't think, and never can be taught to think."<sup>4</sup> If he refers to a deficiency in hereditary capacity I do not agree. Poor minds many of them have, but not, I believe, because of innate deficiencies; rather, because of slipshod training and discipline during grammar and high schools. Once the interest of undergraduates is aroused and their mental tools sharpened, they respond rapidly to stimulus, catch subtle points quite easily, and follow complexities of thought accurately. Although educational psychologists have not demonstrated that mental tests measure hereditary capacity, they probably offer some indication of it. If we assume this, college and university students must be conceded excellent inheritances since as a group they test far above the average. Even if we did not have this evidence we should be brought to the same conclusion, for the secondary schools cannot but act as a selective agent, at least negatively.<sup>5</sup> They

<sup>4</sup>Percy Marks, *Which Way Parnassus?* (New York, 1926), p. 14.

<sup>5</sup>W. B. Pillsbury, "Selection—An Unnoticed Function of Education," *Scientific Monthly*, xii (1921), p. 62.

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weed out the unfit whether they encourage the fit to pursue education further or not.

Nothing is more significant of the maladjustment existing in our universities than the frequency of dishonesty in connection with academic work. Many young men and women who are scrupulously honorable in other relationships of life seem to have little hesitancy in submitting themes and theses which they have not written, in bringing prepared "cribs" to examinations, and in conveying information to one another during the course of an examination. There is a not uncommon feeling that a state of war exists between faculty members and students—no mere game, where the canons of sportsmanship prevail, but a downright, ruthless struggle in which any method of overcoming the foe is justifiable. Their attitude can be partly explained by the unsympathetic attitude of some professors, and partly by the rather mechanical organization involving grades, warnings, and probation; but, certainly, the principal cause must be found in the failure of undergraduates to appreciate the value to themselves of serious and conscientious intellectual effort and achievement.

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Recognizing the existence of a fact or process and understanding its causes are perhaps all that a purely scientific study should attempt. But I trust

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my readers will forgive me if I offer a few observations with respect to the increasing of intellectual interest among undergraduates. Attention will be confined to measures which are within the power of the university or its faculty members, since they are the only agents having any immediate and centralized as well as permanent control over the situation.

The principal cure for present conditions, it seems to me, is a better understanding on the part of the university authorities of "undergraduate nature." This implies not only an insight into the points of view of undergraduates but also a knowledge of how to utilize them. The most promising factor in the present situation appears to be the strength of the self-assertive impulse. Undergraduates like to feel that what they are doing is counting for something. If more than human nature is needed to account for this we may point to the energy of youth and to the American spirit of individualism—that aura of suggestion which renders children ambitious even at a tender age. Although at present this impulse finds its outlet for the most part in athletics and other extra-curricular activities, there is no reason to suppose that, if properly handled, it would not flow almost equally well in scholarly channels.

The self-assertiveness of undergraduates crystallizes into three principal desires—that for present

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self-expression, that for honor or prestige among their fellows, and that for success in later life. Since their nature cannot be expected to change much in the near future, intellectual interest will be increased only as intellectual effort and achievement satisfy these desires. If the dishes placed before the patient are not to his taste, we must replace them with more appetizing ones.

The desire for success in after life cannot be relied upon to produce much intellectual interest among nonprofessional students because of the difficulty in convincing them that there is any vital connection between the two. Much may be done, however, in the direction of enhancing the prestige of intellectual achievement and of procuring a sense of self-expression in the performance of intellectual tasks. Though scholarship is seldom associated in an undergraduate's mind with self-expression or prestige, the possibility of their being closely identified is readily admitted by undergraduates. If an intellectual élite that is admired can once be secured and means be developed for the adequate expression of one's individuality in college work, the problem will be solved. Positive methods should chiefly be relied upon, but there is little doubt that, once the shift toward intellectual development as the primary aim of college life is started, any steps taken to lessen the ever present distractions will facilitate the process.

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The securing of an intellectual élite possessing prestige among undergraduates must be a slow process. Genuine admiration for scholarly attainment will be an accompaniment of, rather than a prelude to, intellectual interest. However, the undergraduate's interest in the immediate and the obvious may be used to awaken respect for good students if the latter are given especial privileges which even the ordinary college man can appreciate. Rhodes scholarships are an example. Most undergraduates do not admire a scholar of high standing as such, but they do envy him if he is appointed to a Rhodes scholarship, for they too would be glad to have the opportunity to spend three years at Oxford. If other similarly patent privileges could be extended to the best scholars, there would soon be a small body of undergraduates who, if they were not admired, would at least be looked upon as the fortunate ones. The transition to admiration for their intellectual abilities might be slow but it would be relatively certain.

It is true that administrators have already conferred degrees "with honor" or "with distinction" at graduation, have given prizes of one kind and another to outstanding students, and have encouraged the foundation of scholarly honorary societies. Undoubtedly the existence of these rewards, especially the possibility of being elected to Phi Beta Kappa, Sigma Xi, and Tau Beta Pi, has

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proved a considerable incentive to serious work. But, after all, these measures hardly go deep enough. An intellectual élite will not possess prestige until its members have advantages of an obvious sort. The separate honors courses now being offered in several American colleges and universities constitute one attempt to accomplish this. They give substantial privilege to the best students which cannot but arouse the envy of the less fortunate.<sup>6</sup> Scholarships in other institutions, traveling fellowships, and the taking of qualified students on scientific expeditions would also place learning in a more favorable light. Another measure which has been adopted in a few institutions is that of giving credit in proportion to the grade of work done, thus shortening the period of residence of the best students. It seems likely that the premium this places on cramming for examinations is not offset by the alleged advantages. A similar criticism might be passed on the suggested plan for competitive intercollegiate examinations in various fields of study. Though the contestants would be brought into prominence, they would not be admired but would be regarded as mere rote learners, for such competition would further the already well developed tendency toward the uncritical acceptance

<sup>6</sup>For a full and able discussion of this subject see: Frank Aydelotte, "Honors Courses in American Colleges and Universities," *Bulletin of the National Research Council*, No. 52.

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of statements made in class or textbooks. True scholarship is primarily a matter of inner expansion and growth, not something to be entirely elicited by external rewards.

On the other hand, intercollegiate competition in specific intellectual projects, though a more indirect means, would probably have more effect in bringing prestige to the participants. President Little of Michigan suggests that contests might be held in the writing of short stories, essays, plays, and poetry, in mechanical inventions, in scientific research, in drawing and architecture, in the arts, and even in social work. During the summer, undergraduates might be given the opportunity to prepare original papers in natural history, economic geography, ethnology, and other subjects which would be studied by university expeditions. Achievement in these fields would mean that one possessed marked individuality and exceptional initiative. The successful ones would therefore be honored by undergraduates as "grinds" are not. One great recommendation for such a scheme is that it would bring many extra-curricular activities into close co-operation with the true purpose of the university. Student interest would be turned almost unconsciously from the external to the vital.

A sense of self-expression in academic work is essential to a high degree of intellectual interest. The student must have a compelling curiosity which



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is both satisfied and still further stimulated by his progressive conquest of strange territory. He experiences the greatest self-expression in mastering a subject when the teacher acts simply as a guide who points the way for his own explorations. It is the consciousness of new relations between phenomena, of a changed organization in the mind which makes the learning process adventurous and enjoyable.

That the college has not generally succeeded in securing such self-expression in scholarship is well known. "The love of American undergraduates for college activities (among which activities study is never by any chance included) and the belief of the American public in the educational value of these activities is due, in part at least, to the fact that in them undergraduates find more scope for their intellectual initiative than they do in their studies. If the regular curriculum could offer the same opportunity for the development of independence and initiative that is now offered by clubs and teams and college journals, some of the energy which undergraduates put into the miscellaneous pursuits would go into their studies with infinitely greater educational results."<sup>7</sup>

It seems paradoxical to say that we must stimulate and even build up an intellectual curiosity

<sup>7</sup> Frank Aydelotte, "Honors Courses in American Colleges and Universities," *Bulletin of the National Research Council*, No. 40, p. 6.

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among undergraduates. Yet so many other motives bring men and women to college that such is the case. In an effort to develop this trait more attention might well be given to the selection of faculty members. There is no better guaranty of eager and interested students than an inspiring teacher, and nothing so certain to produce apathy as a colorless, unimaginative one. The man who does not radiate enthusiasm for his subject and learning in general, no matter how encyclopedic his knowledge, has no license to teach any one, most of all, freshmen. On the other hand, a teacher who is not only proud of his learning but who makes clearly evident an eagerness to share his knowledge with his students will certainly enlist their whole-hearted interest.

A recent and promising innovation designed to promote intellectual curiosity is the survey course for freshmen which gives a bird's-eye view of a large field of study.<sup>8</sup> The aim is to serve undergraduates with enough intellectual food in palatable guise to whet their appetites for more. And on the whole, the purpose is generally achieved if we may credit the opinions of those in close touch with such courses. The chief criticism leveled at them is that, unless the instructor is careful to point out that

<sup>8</sup> For a full discussion see: "Initiatory Courses for Freshmen," *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors*, vii, October, 1922, p. 10.

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the class is but scratching the surface in each department of knowledge, the students will secure "a false sense of omniscience."

The second great need, if we are to have self-expression in scholarship, is that intellectually curious students shall be able to press forward to knowledge with a minimum of obstacles in their way. Too often a man enters a course with a keen desire to learn only to have the edge taken off his appetite by his ignorance of how to attack the problems or by the monotonous routine of the classroom. Even making allowance for the exigencies due to large numbers, if the student's preparation and preferences, the teacher's abilities, the methods of administration, and the curricular arrangements were satisfactory and properly coördinated, this deadening of the adventurous spirit would not occur.

A freshman course in thinking, such as given at Johns Hopkins and Columbia and recommended by Committee G of the American Association of University Professors, is an interesting experiment intended to equip the undergraduate with a better supply of mental tools than he has yet acquired. Professor Coss, who is in charge of the Columbia course, "An Introduction to Reflective Thinking," says: "The purpose of the course is to acquaint the student with the thinking process and to increase his interest and ability to consider critically the foun-

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dation of his beliefs. It invites a consideration of the methodology of thought and proof with actual instances of thought in conflict.”<sup>9</sup> Not the least of the advantages of such a course is that it is so totally different from anything which the student has had in high school that it is apt to convince him of the seriousness of college work.

Teaching methods have a great deal to do with the degree to which self-expression in scholarship is developed. The twentieth-century student is chiefly interested in things which have an easily ascertainable, almost evident, relation to him. All subjects should therefore use as the point of departure the place where they impinge upon the student's life. Thence he can be led, an interested follower, to the ends of the earth and the beginning of time. Moreover, a student feels that he is expressing his own individuality to a much greater extent if he is given definite problems to solve. Original work, such as reports, theses, and special investigations, gives the student valuable experience in self-reliance as well as increased intellectual interest.

It has already been intimated that large classes lessen intellectual interest, not only because they lead to a preponderance of lecturing, but because the sense of intimacy and comradeship in an intellectual enterprise is not developed among the

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

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students. There is little question that, when pecuniary considerations make it possible, the introduction of more classes of the discussion type would be valuable. In preparing for these classes students are expected not only to assimilate a certain amount of knowledge, but to do original thinking as well, so that they can carry on a critical discussion during the hour. The teacher may, and often does, lecture for part of the period, but he provides for the expression of student opinions as well—opinions perhaps contrary to those of the text-writer and the teacher. This type of class encourages vital, because immediate, give and take between instructor and student, being superior in this regard to the lecture supplemented by a quiz section. It should be small enough so that all may take an active part and yet large enough to insure a wide diversity of views. Twenty to thirty appears to be a size which fulfills these conditions. This number preserves the intimate nature of the group which makes for stimulating discussion and the development of friendships within the classroom that may be renewed outside as the basis for a further interchange of ideas. That this kind of class is highly desirable may be inferred from the fact that the most effective classes in the university, the graduate seminars, are conducted in this manner.

There is no doubt that much intellectual apathy among the most capable undergraduates is due to

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the ease with which they can keep up with their plodding fellows. One method of overcoming this difficulty is the plan of sectioning on the basis of ability.<sup>10</sup> In very large courses that are divided into many sections the varying abilities of students are discovered as quickly as possible and the individuals grouped accordingly. By this method the classes are homogeneous in respect to ability and may be kept interesting for all by proceeding at the proper rate. None become bored and all can keep up. Provision is made for periodic reclassifications so that those originally placed in low sections may rise into higher if they prove themselves worthy. The chief objections raised to the plan are that the poorer sections, having no bright students in them, are likely to be dull and uninspiring both for teacher and taught, and that the students in them become discouraged by being stamped as of inferior ability. However, Dean Seashore, who has made a thorough trial of the system, thinks that these alleged drawbacks are either nonexistent or trifling.

A student cannot express himself thoroughly in his academic work unless his subjects are so chosen as to enable his mind to enlarge its grasp in an orderly and balanced manner. The selection of courses in a hit-or-miss fashion without much regard

<sup>10</sup> For a full discussion see: C. E. Seashore, "Sectioning Classes on the Basis of Ability," *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors*, ix, October, 1923, p. 11.

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to previous or subsequent work is therefore highly inimical to intellectual interest. If our undergraduates had definite ends in view and judgment enough to know the best means of achieving them, the free elective system would be satisfactory. But as matters now stand some regulation or guidance is needed.

Many institutions have developed systems of "majors and minors" or "concentration and distribution" in order to meet this situation. A more recent innovation and one which promises added advantages is the splitting of the college course into two halves—one a period in which the student gains a broad foundation of knowledge, the other a period in which he concentrates most of his energies in one particular field. One of the most desirable features of this system is that it tends towards a greater amount of discussion of intellectual problems outside the classroom. The curriculum of the junior college is much more unified than that of the first two years under the ordinary system so that students have a far better opportunity to tread on common intellectual ground in their conversation. Furthermore, the senior college students are constantly thrown with others working in the same general field and are certain to continue the association after class hours.

Another improvement, greatly needed in American universities but rarely employed, is the general

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examination.<sup>11</sup> This is particularly valuable under a system of specialization in the last two years, in which case the test covers only the field of concentration. The aim is to compel the student to think of a field of knowledge, not in terms of fragments to be learned, passed, and forgotten, but as a vital unity to be mastered as a whole and kept as a useful tool. If tutors can be employed to advise undergraduates about their reading and ascertain the progress they are making, so much the better, for this affords an intimate contact between the mature and the immature mind which is unfortunately so infrequent in American universities. The value of the general examination itself is also enhanced because it can be made much more exacting than when the student is left to fill in the gaps in his knowledge and unify the whole field in his mind unassisted. But even if a system of tutors is too expensive, the general examination plays a desirable rôle, for it makes the student take an interest in, and responsibility for, his own development. It forces students to choose courses wisely, to do outside work, and to unify the subject by reading and reflection. Perhaps if the general examination were more widely adopted Veblen's criticism that "the collegiate school has to deal with a large body of

<sup>11</sup> For a full discussion see: "The General Final Examination," *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors*, x, December, 1924, p. 11.



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students, many of whom have little abiding interest in their academic work beyond the academic credits necessary to be accumulated for honorable discharge"<sup>12</sup> would contain less truth than it now does.

There is a growing feeling throughout the university world that there should be much more of an organized effort than heretofore to help the students meet their problems of adjustment satisfactorily. The adoption of "freshman weeks," the introduction of personnel bureaus, the attention being given to systems of faculty advisers, and the employment of psychiatrists to lend their aid in the most aggravated cases indicate that the need for more guidance and mature advice is gradually being realized. Not all of these measures are designed primarily to make the adjustment more satisfactory between the undergraduate and his academic course, but all would ultimately tend to have that effect. They aim to develop the self of the student in such a way as to ensure the most fruitful growth under that great complex of influences which is a university.

The remedies for intellectual apathy should be as far as possible positive in their nature; that is, the undergraduates should be led gradually to a fuller and finer appreciation of things of the mind without being subjected to restrictive measures.

<sup>12</sup> Thorstein Veblen, *The Higher Learning in America* (New York, 1918), p. 103.

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However, the presence of those who have no true interest in their studies and no desire to have their interest aroused is a great menace to the tone of the institution. They pollute the academic atmosphere to such an extent that the college would be better off without them. All measures which will discover such individuals should therefore be employed so as to eliminate them. Furthermore the undergraduate cannot follow General Sheridan's advice—"Now and then be silent; sit and think."—unless some of the distractions of the college milieu are lessened, by compulsion if in no other way. The less desirable student activities have obtained such a dominant place in university life that it may be necessary for the authorities to interfere in order to secure fair play for things of the mind. Our collegiate atmosphere is not conducive to a poetic, contemplative existence, such as we suppose to be natural among the venerable buildings and noble associations of Oxford. The bustle of American life presses too close and the undergraduates are too susceptible to its influence.

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Coeducation is regarded by many as a detrimental influence on scholarship. In an endeavor to discover the degree of truth in this view I have gathered opinions on the subject from many undergraduates at a large coeducational university. Very

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few of the women seem to think the system harmful to them, the consensus of opinion being that, if there is any effect, it is a slightly beneficial one. The reasons assigned are various: that coeducation makes class discussions more interesting because of the diversity of viewpoint; that women do not wish to appear stupid before men; and that men, having broader experience, make classes more enlightening. The small minority who felt that the scholarship of women is injured base their case on the facts that men are not as conscientious as women and thus lower the class standards; that women are so self-conscious that their ability to convey their ideas is impaired; and that there is less freedom of discussion on both sides because of the difference in sex.

The men show less agreement, all shades of opinion being expressed with no distinct preponderance on either side of the question. The chief argument advanced against coeducation is the distraction which the presence of women entails. A few think that women's remarks are not to the point and consume time needlessly; others believe the freedom of discussion is greatly curtailed. Many say that the effect either way is negligible, while an equal number incline to the view that the competition of women stimulates the men to do better.

It is my observation that the men are affected but little by the presence of the opposite sex in their

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classrooms. A few who are naturally shy perhaps do not do themselves justice in recitation; a few others are distracted from the work in hand by their desire to talk to, look at, or think about the women; to some, however, the presence of the feminine sex is a spur to accomplishment, an invitation to "show off." The women are more self-conscious than the men with the result that they are apt to be diffident and not express themselves as freely as they otherwise would. The same characteristic, however, makes them much more fearful than the men of being laughed at or thought unintelligent, so that when they do recite they are more eager to do well.

The admitted fact that the scholarship of women in coeducational institutions, as measured by grades, is generally better than that of the men has been well explained recently in this way: "Women are more conscientious than men; more industrious because more docile, more sensitive to official and social disapproval."<sup>13</sup> Because of its traditionally subordinate position in the social order, the feminine sex has been held to a stricter accountability than the masculine. Even to-day girls are undoubtedly trained to a greater sense of obligation and obedience than boys. They are more the subjects of anxiety than their brothers, are therefore more protected, and are given to understand that they must do as they are told. The habit of subjection to

<sup>13</sup> John P. Gavit, *College* (New York, 1925), p. 105.

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authority is carried over to their school work and assigned tasks are usually scrupulously performed. However, those are not lacking who believe the men show greater intellectual originality.

Objection to coeducation has recently been made on a novel ground; to wit, that it marks off the field of knowledge in an artificial way into men's course and women's courses.<sup>14</sup> It is shown by elaborate statistics that literatures are studied by men much less frequently in coeducational institutions than in colleges and universities for men only, presumably because these subjects have come to be regarded as more or less effeminate. However true this criticism may be—and I am inclined to think there is much truth in it—the remedy does not appear to me to be the abolition of coeducation, but rather the gradual development through faculty influence of a broader point of view which will eliminate such foolish and artificial distinctions.

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That the universities themselves are only secondarily culpable in the matter of intellectual indifference is amply proved by the failure of all but a small group of students to show any marked interest in means of learning outside the regular curriculum. For instance, at the University of

<sup>14</sup> See Rollo W. Brown, "Co-education versus Literature," *Harpers*, cxlviii (1923-4), p. 148.

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Michigan there are only fourteen societies with a membership of approximately four hundred and sixty-five whose principal aim is the broadening of the undergraduate's understanding of life. One liberal arts student in twelve, then, takes enough interest in some field of study to ally himself with an organization of this kind. Nor does membership always mean active participation, many having but a perfunctory interest. But for those who are vitally concerned with these societies they have immense value. Faculty men are always included in the membership so that the students receive the benefit of expert criticism and advice. Furthermore, there is much opportunity for the development of a real knowledge of some particular field and plenty of chances for self-expression along scholarly lines. Yet these societies confer almost no prestige on their members. General student opinion is indifferent to them, although they form one of the chief bulwarks against the complete conquest of the student mind by the forces of externalism and superficiality. What a small garrison to be entrusted with so important a post!

The paucity of attendance at really informative lectures is also indicative of the student attitude toward learning. Eminent men from other universities do not draw nearly the crowds that the sensational moving pictures do. If college men and women turn out in force for a lecture at all, it is

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usually for one of a highly popular nature. Those of more vital import are shunned as smacking of academic work.

The amount of association of faculty members with undergraduates outside of the classroom or of such organizations as I have mentioned is slight. Hundreds of college men and women do not know a single professor in any but a formal, professional way. The size of our universities is of course a great obstacle. For this reason alone any given student and any given professor are much less likely to meet each other outside the classroom than they are in a small college. But, beyond this, there is the lack of common ground between the two. Students as a rule are not deeply interested in their academic work or intellectual matters generally. Faculty men are—to the exclusion, partly at least, of those other interests which engage the student.

Nor do undergraduates do much reading calculated to help them along the road to learning. A careful study at the University of Chicago indicated that the average individual does less than three hours of "serious reading" a week outside the required work.<sup>15</sup> Though a university library furnishes the college man or woman with the thought of the ages in well ordered and easily accessible form and gives opportunity to follow any line of study, the priv-

<sup>15</sup> *Report of the Faculty-Student Committee on the Distribution of Students' Time* (Chicago, 1925), p. 20.

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ilege is seldom utilized. For instance, approximately two-thirds of the reading done through the facilities of the Michigan Library is of an assigned character. Of the remaining third (which represents approximately three books per undergraduate a year) much more than half is undertaken for pure pleasure, with no thought of gaining knowledge. There seems to be little evidence of intellectual curiosity, of the desire to penetrate new depths. Formalism again furnishes a partial explanation. Because of the lack of interest in their studies, college men and women have to be coerced into doing supplementary reading. This results in required reading lists, a fixed number of pages a week, and so on, a procedure which puts an effective damper on whatever interested browsing there might otherwise be.



## CHAPTER IV

### HOME LIFE

THAT sphere of undergraduate thought which centers about the place of residence is much less expressive of the peculiar background and point of view of students than are their modes of recreation or their attitude toward scholarship. The relationships which arise from living in close association with others are more dependent upon human nature than on acquired systems of thought and hence do not reveal the variation to which institutionalized contacts are subject. In the family and play group are learned those primary ideals which are everywhere much alike and which tend to make later living associations not greatly different from generation to generation. Hence we shall expect to discover fewer signs of disorganization here than in other fields of thought.

College men and women live under a great variety of conditions entailing the most diverse habits and points of view. From the large number of adjustments to the problem of living in a university community, three general types emerge: residence as a member of an organized group of congenial fellow

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students, residence in dormitories, and that in rooming houses or private homes. The first is perhaps the most typical of young America since these house groups have arisen and developed quite spontaneously. Dormitories, on the other hand, have almost invariably been established by the university authorities and, however much undergraduates may approve of them, they bear the mark of the older generation. Residence in rooming houses or private homes is still less expressive of student points of view since it is usually the result of necessity rather than choice.



Fraternities, sororities, and house clubs occupy a prominent place in most American universities, the chief exceptions being those institutions which possess very complete systems of dormitories. Their essence is the living together under one roof of congenial students who are banded into a definitely organized group. The fact that most of them are called by the Greek letter initials of some carefully guarded motto and are otherwise characterized by secrecy has little to do with their actual life. Students have simply fashioned their societies after the fraternal orders of their elders, adding a few touches from the pageantry of university functions. As far as their influence on their members or on university life generally goes, they might just as well have

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their archives open to the public. Including pledgemen, the active membership of these groups runs from fifteen to fifty, with thirty as the average size. Most house groups are affiliated with chapters in other colleges and universities in a national organization. However, except as such affiliation gives each chapter backing and prestige, it affects the life of the active members but slightly. Our attention will be centered upon the so-called general fraternities and sororities since the professional ones do not draw their membership from the ranks of undergraduates.

The active members of such a house group exercise almost complete control over its destinies. There are, of course, a few rules laid down by the university authorities, a few by an interfraternity or intersorority council, and, if the society is a local chapter of a national organization, there is a general constitution to abide by. But these regulations are so fundamental and so permanent as to be taken for granted and are scarcely felt at all. The alumnae and alumni of these house groups exert considerable influence on the course of affairs, especially as regards the pledging of new members and decisions on important questions such as the building of a new house. But, for the most part, the students sail their own ship. They have the final word in the selection of new members and to them falls the task of establishing and enforcing

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rules for their collective life, such as the setting aside of certain hours of quiet for study and the restriction or prohibition of gambling and drinking. In the absence of definite regulations the general sentiment of the group as expressed in certain policies has much the same authority. At nearly all universities there are some fraternities which have so strong a traditional policy relative to participation in extra-curricular activities that few of their members dare fail to "try out" for something.

The loyalty which members feel toward these groups is intense. All have in mind the best interests of the whole and strive more or less conscientiously to uphold its honor. Those are frowned upon who do not take an active share in the group's activities, those admired who show the most devotion. Indeed the individuals sometimes identify themselves with the group to such an extent as to prejudice the interests of the university. Cases are not uncommon in which students of an intellectual bent have taken up extra-curricular activities against their better judgment, merely from a sense of loyalty to their fraternities or sororities. This ideal is not only developed by the everyday life of the group; it is deliberately inculcated. Freshmen learn early that they owe a duty to other members of the group, collectively and individually. They have domestic duties which they are expected to perform regularly and they are urged to remember that

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wherever they go they represent their house and must conduct themselves accordingly. To some extent there is a spirit of rivalry in service to the group. Many societies foster competition among their individual members or their several classes (freshmen, sophomore, etc.) along various lines. Occasionally this rivalry is for highest academic standing.

As in any group, leaders are usually chosen from the more experienced members—in this case the upper-classmen. Commonly two or three seniors are the real guiding spirits of the organization. Their views are given weight in the chapter meetings and their plans rarely disapproved. However, the following of the remaining members is apt to be much less sheeplike than in many other groups. A college fraternity or sorority is composed of individuals very nearly on a level as regards natural endowment and advantages of training. There is therefore almost no blind acquiescence of the mass in the program of an admired leader.



The opportunity which house groups afford for intimate companionship is perhaps their greatest benefit. The individual cannot live a well rounded, contented existence without constant contact with others. Some can be satisfied with obtaining this through books, but most of us prefer flesh and blood

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persons. The fraternity or sorority combines admirably the satisfaction of this desire with the exigencies of food and lodging. A member of such a group not only has at hand companions for any recreation in which he may wish to indulge, but also firm friends in whom he has confidence. A sense of security and of well-being is his which only a brotherhood in fact as well as in name can give. Indeed, it is no figure of speech to say that many house groups succeed in reproducing a homelike atmosphere.

Fraternity and sorority life is good training for active participation in the larger society. The members not only must get along peaceably with one another, but they must work together in order to achieve the group's aims. Each one must find his place in the general scheme and perform his particular function with due regard to the welfare of the whole. The control is democratic so that the responsibility for the group's action rests on all. The lessons learned in undergraduate days are certain to aid in producing the proper kind of citizenship in after life.

The group life also tends to develop pleasant manners among the members. Matters of etiquette are rather closely watched in an effort to keep the reputation of the society unsullied. The guests who are frequently present at meals must not receive a poor impression with regard to courtesy, nor must the

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house parties or dances be marred by marks of ill-breeding.

House groups confer prestige upon their members, though in varying degrees. Whenever a few are selected from a group like the undergraduate body to become members of exclusive organizations, those selected are apt to be regarded as superior, especially when the organizations, as here, are in a dominant position as regards the activities of the whole group. Two considerations seem to determine the amount of prestige which fraternities and sororities possess. First, age is an important factor. Ever since the beginning of the movement in 1825, other things being equal, the older groups have been favored by freshmen. Aged traditions lend an air of solidity which makes the society appear more honorable. Then, too, the older a group, the longer its roll of famous alumni and the more its name and fame have been noised abroad. Though the exceptions are many, the older groups generally have their choice of new members. Hence they maintain their prestige. Almost the only thing which can enable a younger group to attain a greater reputation in student circles than an older one is the second factor, prominence in extra-curricular activities. Incoming freshmen who are ambitious to become "big men" in campus life, feel that to ally themselves with a society which holds a preëminent place in athletics or journalistic work is a great honor as

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well as an opportunity. Except in the case of professional fraternities, high rank in scholarship has practically no tendency toward raising a chapter's reputation among students.

From the student point of view one of the greatest advantages of belonging to a fraternity or sorority is that one possesses a better chance to attain success in extra-curricular activities. Even when there is no unfairness in awarding positions on athletic teams, on student publications, and in other campus organizations, as unfortunately there frequently is, the support and encouragement of one's house group almost always gives one an advantage. The fraternity men get started sooner in these activities and are advised and helped in their work by those older members of the group who are actively engaged in the same activities. The urging of under-classmen to "go out" for campus activities sometimes proves unfortunate in respect to their intellectual development. But they are themselves rarely aware of any detrimental effect, or, at least, not until much later.

In some instances advantages of a scholastic nature accrue to members of house groups. Although this is particularly true of professional fraternities and sororities, it is sometimes the case with the general organizations also. Supervision of the freshmen's work is common, reports being obtained from their instructors at intervals, and aid given



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where it seems necessary. However, the academic assistance given by fraternity brothers and sorority sisters has until very recently been completely offset by the distractions of group living. The temptation to drop into one another's rooms and chat during the evening has often proved so strong as to affect studies disastrously.<sup>1</sup> The house groups themselves and particularly their national organizations have become painfully aware of this blot upon their escutcheon and are now trying in numerous ways to raise the scholarship of their members. Already the scholastic average of house groups is in many institutions considerably above that of the whole university.

The very possession of a comfortable home to which a house group member may bring his friends for an occasional meal is of great value. Men and women are thus able to cultivate an intimacy with those not in their own society under pleasant conditions. Of especial importance is the relationship with faculty members made possible in this way. Fraternities and sororities entertain many of their teachers during the year and it is not at all uncommon for a fast friendship to be formed between one or two of the latter and the members of a society.

<sup>1</sup>The Chicago study showed that, though fraternity and club members had a higher scholarship average than independents, they spent fewer hours a week upon their courses. *Report of the Faculty-Student Committee on the Distribution of Students' Time* (Chicago, 1925), p. 43.

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We have too few such contacts in American universities.

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The greatest shortcoming of fraternities and sororities is their failure to develop true individuality. Instead of fostering functional differences among the men and women who compose them they tend to reduce all to common types. A European student who visited many American universities during the early part of 1923 remarked on this fact in the following terms:

"The standard seems to be uniformity. Everyone who is different is crazy, perhaps a bookworm or the like, and only those students are chosen who are believed to be able to become good fraternity brothers or sorority sisters, and that of course means that they will have to measure up to what is considered 'good form.' . . . They dress alike, they do the same things at the same time, they think and speak in the same terms and have practically all the same interests. Each year, when a number of freshmen are chosen to become members of the fraternity, they have to undergo a long period of education when they are told by the older students what is expected from a member and what it is necessary to do in order to keep up the standard and honor of the institution. If by any chance a freshman has a personality of his own, nevertheless he willingly submits to this standardizing because he wants to

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enjoy all the good things which he can get only as a member of a fraternity." <sup>2</sup>

The externalism of American life is the principal cause of this situation. Since congeniality is the chief criterion in selecting new members and since to our young people this implies likeness in all respects, each group runs to a type. The house group members are not looking for a stimulating intellectual life, but an easy-going, sociable one. Fewer embarrassments, arguments, and disagreeable situations generally will arise if all are alike. So let there be uniformity, even if it does stunt the growth of the mind! The tendency toward a type is augmented by the fact that the relatives and close friends of members are usually, though not always, looked upon with favor and admitted. Thus each group is apt to become gradually representative of a certain social class. An exception is made, however, in the case of athletes. They are usually desired by house groups because of the potentialities which they possess for reflecting glory on the organization. They will therefore be invited to join despite incongruities of social status. Some fraternity chapters have even gone so far as to offer membership as an inducement to athletes to come to their university, honestly feeling that by so doing they were serving their Alma Mater.

Added to the similarity of raw material is the

<sup>2</sup>Jorgen Holck, "Fraternities," *Survey*, 1 (1923), p. 391.

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uniformity of the process by which it is molded. A freshman who is pledged to a house group is usually greatly flattered by the honor and takes an immense pride in the society to which he is soon to be admitted. He wishes to become a good member and true, one whom his fellows will respect and admire. To his immature mind this means but one thing—conformity to the opinions and practices of the older members. They represent what he wishes ardently to become; to their personalities he is a devoted slave. Nor do the older ones leave the training of freshmen to hero worship alone. They lay down rules of action which may be disobeyed only at the displeasure of the group. Even when there is no explicit restriction the vague sentiment of the society exercises a powerful control. New members accept traditional policies uncritically and, in turn, foster them when they become upper-classmen.

So serious is the check which house groups place on the development of true individuality that some believe it sufficient to discredit the whole fraternity and sorority system. Realizing that most house groups do little to stimulate interest in fine achievement but rather repress it, that the conversation of their members usually turns on commonplace topics, and that the ways in which time is spent are usually quite unprofitable, these critics think that the association of university men and women in intimate groups is inevitably harmful. It seems more prob-

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able, however, that the fault lies with the general type of student. Conditions among independents are little better. Though there are no arbitrary restrictions in this case, suggestion still operates to reproduce the generally admired type of easy-going student in great numbers. The percentage of independents elected to Phi Beta Kappa at Michigan, for instance, runs no higher over a period of years than that of fraternity and sorority members. The solution is not to eliminate house groups but to develop students with interest in intellectual matters. Once this is achieved fraternities and sororities could be of service in providing a means for the satisfaction of this interest. Nothing could be more stimulating than association with a congenial group of young people all eager in their pursuit of knowledge.

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The relationship of alumnae and alumni to their house groups is often a close one. The older members almost invariably drop in on the undergraduates when they revisit their Alma Mater. Unfortunately, the views they express and their conduct at such times have not always had the salutary influence which we expect the experienced to exercise on the young. Many were in college when the faculty and students were less congenial than at present, a time indeed when the students regarded university life as a game with the faculty as the opposition.

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Consequently returning alumni often sow seeds of dissension. Again, since the prohibition amendment became effective, many of the younger ones, regarding a return to the university as an opportunity to indulge their desires free from all restraint, have made a practice of drinking heavily in the chapter houses at the time of football games, initiations, and other functions. These conditions have undone much of the good which the more intelligent and conscientious alumni have accomplished. Though immediate association with alumni has not always proved beneficial, the mediate relationship through an alumni association has almost always been helpful. When the older men meet to give serious thought to the problems of the active members they usually arrive at sound conclusions. Their guidance and advice through this channel have a steady influence on the younger men.

The customary practice is for the fraternities and sororities at each university to have central bodies or committees made up of delegates from the several house groups. The strength of these organizations varies widely from one institution to another. Their usual duties are the establishment and enforcement of rules relative to pledging and initiation. Occasionally they consider matters of general policy or develop plans to help raise money for some worthy cause. Sometimes, however, these organizations are poorly supported by their member

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groups and enter into the general life of the university very little. The work to be done is so meager that little interest is taken in their activities. However, the rules for "rushing" freshmen which these committees lay down do to a large extent prevent animosity between the member organizations. The fact that the fraternities are usually on better terms than the sororities I attribute to the greater number of activities outside their own groups in which the men mingle. The women are not so likely to know members of other sororities well and hence their suspicion of unfair dealing is more easily aroused. Rivalry in service is developed to some extent among house groups, the support of some university project being the usual aim. Usually very little notoriety is connected with such services so that the motive does not seem to be that of prestige.

Not only do the members of any particular house group run to a type, but all members of fraternities or sororities tend to be more or less alike. They are generally of wealthier families than the average student. The expense of belonging to a house group works towards this result; also the fact that wealthy students are more apt to have had relatives or friends in the university who can recommend them. Another consideration is the more polished manner of the rich boy or girl, which wins the favor of fraternity or sorority members. The charge, sometimes made, that the extremely well-to-do are taken

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in so that they may better the financial condition of the group cannot be generally maintained.

The membership of fraternities and sororities also comprises a disproportionately large number of dwellers in big cities. The air of sophistication usually acquired by such boys and girls serves them well when they are being "rushed." Furthermore, individuals from large city high schools or fashionable preparatory schools have many more friends at a university who can "pull" for them.

Perhaps more universal than either of these characteristics is the open, pleasant nature of house group members. Since men and women do not like to live with individuals who are taciturn, morose, or highly self-centered, great pains are taken not to select them. On the other hand, obviously kindly and sympathetic persons are much desired.

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The relationship of house group members to the university as a whole is many-sided. For one thing these organizations are a principal means of giving continuity to the nonacademic sides of university life. They are the carriers of traditions, they foster university spirit, and they preserve the memory of past experiences which will afford aid in the present. They also keep alumni interested in their Alma Mater. Probably nothing is more potent in maintaining the allegiance of a university's sons and



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daughters than the attachment which fraternity alumni and sorority alumnae feel for their house groups. Again, fraternities and sororities are almost invariably behind movements which the university authorities inaugurate, except those which, to them, smack of paternalism, such as increased control of student conduct or campus activities. Though the support is sometimes given under compunction, their service in this connection can hardly be overestimated. The organization which they embody is often used as the tool to get at the minds of the students. In this connection it may be said that unfair advantage is sometimes taken of house groups in the matter of "drives." Houses have considerable pride and do not wish to fail in subscribing their quotas in the face of the rest. Their desire for prestige is thus capitalized.

One of the greatest services rendered to the university by fraternities and sororities is their training of leaders.<sup>3</sup> The great majority of students who direct campus affairs are members of house groups in which they have learned lessons in organization and coöperation which serve them in good stead in other activities. The talent which has been developed in exclusive societies is utilized in the service of the whole student community.

The rivalry of house groups among themselves or

<sup>3</sup> See Thomas A. Clark, *The Fraternity and the College* (Menassha, Wis., 1916), p. 26.

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between them and the independents makes for the practice of petty politics in the selection of candidates to fill campus offices. Far too often a man is supported or opposed according to the fraternity to which he belongs. Indeed, this may be the usual case. Moreover, the organization of these groups gives them power which they often wield selfishly. A situation in which fraternity men subordinate their loyalty to the university to their loyalty to the fraternity is not uncommon. A group will oppose a faculty or interfraternity ruling which it recognizes as beneficial to the university simply because it fears consequent hardship or loss of prestige to itself.

The dominant position which fraternities and sororities hold in campus life is also unfortunate in that the system is far from democratic. Seeing the ascendancy of house group members, independents, without anybody to back them, are likely to be disheartened and forego attempts at expressing their individuality in journalistic, dramatic, or other activities. They also are unable to formulate and give united expression to their views, with the result that house group opinion tends to be synonymous with campus opinion.

Organization also becomes a harmful force in the case of undesirable tendencies at work in university life as a whole. Unless house groups have high-minded leaders who rise above the general current

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of student thought and see its weaknesses, these societies are almost certain to accentuate evils. Wherever, for instance, a tolerant attitude toward drinking exists among students there is frequently more tolerance among fraternities than elsewhere.

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The problem of the relations between members of fraternities and sororities and independents is always an important one. In an endeavor to arrive at an accurate account of this situation I asked many Michigan students, both members of house groups and independents, to give their conception of the feeling on each side. Their answers showed a wide range of opinion, from those who thought that house group members were snobbish toward all independents to those who said that the attitude of the former was one of admiration, and from those who thought that independents scorned or pitied house group members to those who said that the latter were highly esteemed. Though there seemed to be no consensus or even a definite trend of opinion, a few observations on the results obtained may be hazarded. It is quite clear that fraternity men and sorority women appear to feel superior whether they actually feel so or not. Probably the fact that they tend to select their companions almost exclusively from their own groups makes them seem indifferent to outsiders and often gives offense.

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Though there is undoubtedly some snobbishness over and above this unintentional slighting, I think the amount of it is usually overestimated. Most house group members do not feel superior, but merely luckier, or different, or out of sympathy for one reason or another.

On the independent side two groups may be distinguished—those who have refused to join house groups, and those who never have been asked. The former, a small class, either look down upon or pity fraternity men and sorority women as people who are leading a narrow, conventional, and rather undemocratic existence. The remaining independents harbor all sorts of feelings. Some admire fraternity men and sorority women; others resent the advantages house groups give and the power their members enjoy; still others feel themselves simply of a different sort and keep aloof.

Several students were of the opinion that there was more friction among the women of the two classes, than among the men. If so, it is probably because there are more men's organizations than women's in which house group members and independents mingle.

This house group-independent relationship varies from one university to another to such an extent that no university can be said to be typical. The widespread criticism of house groups for being extremely self-centered and snobbish would lead one

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to suppose that there were more grounds for objection at many other institutions than at Michigan.

\* \* \*

House groups present an interesting study of the mind of American university students. Though far from including all the men and women even in those institutions where they are most firmly established, they yet represent a type of life which the majority like and sanction. Their remarkable growth is one evidence of this. One hundred years has seen the whole development of the fraternity and sorority system. Although Phi Beta Kappa was established as a secret society at William and Mary College in 1776, it was not until the founding of Kappa Alpha at Union in 1825 that the house group as we know it came into being. Thenceforward new organizations sprang up rapidly and the old ones organized chapters in other colleges and universities. The movement has progressed apace until at the present time there are upwards of one hundred and fifty national fraternities and sororities with approximately four thousand chapters in all.<sup>4</sup> The total membership of existing general fraternities and sororities alone is approximately six hundred thousand. Not only is the number of chapters increasing, but the proportion of students in a typical uni-

<sup>4</sup> *Baird's Manual of American College Fraternities* (10th ed., New York, 1923), pp. 750-758.

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versity like Michigan who are members of these groups is constantly growing. From 1906 to 1926, this proportion rose steadily from 22 to 34 per cent.<sup>5</sup>

The causes for the popularity of house groups among American students are not far to seek. The desire for fellowship appears to be the most fundamental. American youths are extraordinarily sociable, perhaps because the confusion of modern life renders the individual unstable and tends to throw him back on the mass for support. To this desire for companionship is added that sentiment approving the alliance of the individual with organized groups which I have called the "joining" tradition. The feeling that one must belong to something in order to be respected by one's fellows is deep rooted in American life. The prestige in student circles attached to fraternity or sorority membership is of great importance in the mind of the entering freshman; the desire for a pleasant home life is also influential; while in many cases the more colorful existence which house group members enjoy because of the social functions these organizations hold proves highly attractive.

It may well be wondered why, if the house group is such a typical expression of student nature, there are not more students affiliated with them. That only one-third of the undergraduates at a university so thoroughly organized as Michigan belong to such

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix I, Table L.

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societies would seem to cast doubt on their representative character. The truth, however, is that a great majority of students would prefer to belong to house groups if they could. It is only because various opposing factors are operating that their number is not greatly augmented.

One of the stumbling blocks is the difficulty of getting together enough congenial students to form a new house club. As a rule the independents do not have intimate groups of more than five or six. Most of them know few students when they come and do not greatly enlarge the circle of their intimates. Thus there are very few groups of friendly individuals that could become fraternities or sororities if they so desired. But even if such coteries are formed, it is very hard to establish new house groups on a firm basis. The financial burden incident to renting or buying a house and furnishing it properly is alone a considerable deterrent. Then too, it is hard to get started in the face of many already established societies. New members are not easily induced to join unless a group is well under way and its name well enough known to carry prestige. Men or women would rather wait in hopes of being asked to join one of the older organizations.

Moreover, many students cannot afford to belong to these groups. Though board and lodging are commonly little greater within the organization than outside, there is always the initiation fee to

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consider and, more important, the scale of expenditure for clothes, amusements, and so on, which is undoubtedly higher among fraternity and sorority members than among independents. The rivalry among these societies in the matter of large and luxurious homes has done not a little to prevent their charges for board and lodging from coming down to, or falling below, the level of those paid by independents.

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Dormitory life is not so accurate a reflection of student thought as is that of a house group, for, unlike the latter, it has not grown up through student initiative alone. University men and women have in general acquiesced in and even favored at times the extension of the dormitory system, but the influence of the faculty, administrative officers, and alumni has been predominant. Probably of the three types of student residence under discussion this finds the most favor with the older generation.

The dormitory idea in American universities is a direct inheritance from Oxford and Cambridge. The purpose is to give comfortable living accommodations to students and at the same time to exercise a certain degree of supervision over them. This type of residence was especially needed in the early days of American colleges when many of the students were between fourteen and seventeen. So we find the dormitory system early established at



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Harvard and Yale. The same purposes are met by dormitories now and they are therefore especially desired by university authorities for women who, it is thought, must be carefully guarded and supervised. The proportion of students living in dormitories varies greatly with each university. Harvard, for instance, houses most of her undergraduate students in this fashion, while some of the middle-western institutions have no dormitories for men at all.

Life in a large dormitory affords many contrasts with that in a house group. There is usually not as great a feeling of unity, partly because the group is so unwieldy, partly because its members are not always congenial, and partly because the men or women are commonly not members of the group for three or four years as they are of a fraternity or sorority. The individual usually finds his companionship in small, intimate groups within the whole. Where the meals are taken together efforts are often made to prevent these groups from becoming objectionable cliques by drawing at regular intervals for seats at the dinner table, thus keeping each person in contact with those outside his immediate circle. There is a certain feeling of loyalty to these small groups but it is not nearly so intense as in the case of a fraternity or sorority, since the permanent organization which is a potent factor in the development of moral unity is lacking.

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Though a sympathetic proctor or director may do much to offset it, a large dormitory tends toward formalism, since the numbers which must be taken care of require more or less mechanical treatment. Individual needs and interests do not receive the same opportunities for satisfaction that they do in a house group or smaller dormitory. Nevertheless the fraternities and sororities are at a disadvantage when it comes to the development of breadth. First-hand evidence from individuals who have enjoyed both types of life points to the superiority of the dormitory, as a general rule, in affording a wide diversity of contacts, a vital understanding of all sorts of people. Moreover, where the residents are all of the same college class, class loyalty, almost a thing of the past in some universities, is kept alive.

The small dormitory, housing twenty to thirty students, is a sort of cross between its larger brother and a house group. It possesses much of the unified spirit of the latter, yet like the former it may lead to the association of individuals who are not congenial. What it gains in solidarity and lack of formalism over the large dormitory, it is apt to lose in breadth, though it may well make for a wider range of sympathy than a fraternity or sorority because its membership is more diversified.

There is usually little contact between the students in a men's dormitory and the supervising authority. The customary arrangement is for one

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or more faculty men to reside in the dormitory to see that order is maintained and university rulings observed. These individuals are likely to be engrossed in their own concerns to such an extent that they pay little attention to the students unless some flagrant breach of the required discipline occurs. With women's dormitories, however, the case is different. The social director or chaperon is frequently in close contact with the residents and exerts considerable influence. If she is of a sympathetic nature she is very often a real leader in the dormitory community, guiding her charges more or less and securing for them the chance for proper development. To such a supervisor the women respond with respect and coöperation. If, however, she is domineering and unappreciative of the views of the women under her, she creates a breach which, though obscured by the amenities of daily intercourse, is none the less real. Antagonism and distrust on the part of the residents will be her portion and whatever good qualities she may possess will go for naught. The chaperons in sorority houses are usually even closer to the members of the society than the director of a dormitory, the greater degree of solidarity of house groups making the life more nearly that of a family, with the chaperon approximately the position of a mother.

Dormitory life has many advantages when it is compared with residence in a rooming house. New-

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comers make acquaintances quickly and so are saved the pangs of lonesomeness and the discomfort of feeling "lost" in so large a student body. The residents feel that they are "in things," not isolated, but sharing in the activities of a well established institution. Especially in women's dormitories is a sense of unity developed and loyalty inspired. In some cases there are even dormitory alumnae associations similar to those of fraternities and sororities. In many dormitories the students have a large share in the control so that the lessons of responsibility and coöperation learned in house groups are to be had here also. From the standpoint of health the situation is excellent. All possible sanitary precautions are taken and the meals are often carefully supervised by expert dieticians. The opportunities for intellectual life, though not always utilized, are usually good. Libraries and pleasant places to read are commonly provided; contact with faculty members is often brought about through dinners and teas; and there is a good opportunity for the discussion of studies because, in a group of such size, the chances are great of several being in the same classes.

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Residence in rooming houses is less significant from the point of view of the undergraduate body of thought than other modes of living. As the easiest arrangement for housing university men and

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women it is accepted and made the best of, but it is not regarded by many as a particularly happy solution. Two sorts of rooming houses may be distinguished—those which are approved and in some degree supervised by the university, and those with which the university has no connection.

Approved lodging houses furnish a favorite method of accommodating university women since they afford that element of protection and oversight which the American public desires with reference to its daughters in college. The house is privately owned and the lady in charge has usually no official connection with the university, but she is required to see that her students abide by all university regulations. If the situation at Michigan where more than one-third of the women live in such houses may be regarded as typical, there is generally little solidarity among the residents. This is because the students have usually not chosen to live together, because there is not the unifying influence of meals around the same board, and because, though the householder may bring the women together to discuss questions of house discipline, she seldom attempts to foster social gatherings. Quite commonly the only intimate group with which a woman living in such a house identifies herself is made up of those with whom she takes her meals. The instability of such groups and the disadvantageous conditions in boarding houses and restau-

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rants under which they foregather detract from their value. At Michigan the scholarship of women living in these houses is considerably below that of sorority and dormitory women. Although there is a factor of selection coming in which raises the ratings of the others, there can be little doubt that much of the difference is due to the mutual interest and stimulus which a house group or dormitory affords. At those institutions where men's rooming houses are supervised by the authorities there is usually less actual control of the students than in the case of the women—a natural result of the general belief that a young man can take care of himself.

Hundreds of students in almost every university live in unsupervised rooming houses. At most mid-western and western universities the number is very large—sometimes well over half of the entire enrollment, though usually none are women. The effects of this kind of life are difficult to generalize. There is commonly even less group feeling than in the case of a supervised house, for the latter is at least a unity from the standpoint of the university administration. Little choice is exercised in the matter of living companions except with respect to roommates. Once in a while several students, finding themselves congenial, will gather in the same house successive years, thus becoming a sort of house club. But these instances are rare.

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Much of the comfort of this sort of living depends on the lady of the house. If she takes a real interest in the men under her roof, if she makes them feel that her house is, temporarily at least, home, the situation leaves little to be desired. If, on the other hand, the household is the scene of dissensions between landlady and student or if the relationship is purely a business one, rooming house life has little to recommend it. Possibly the usual situation is for the student to be on amicable but not cordial terms with the family of the house. He lacks anything like home life and is thrown on his own responsibility the more. Life of this sort develops self-reliance if all goes well; there is less of the slavish conformity to narrow group conventions than among house group members. But if all does not go well, it fosters irresponsibility and worse; the support which consciousness of membership in an organized group gives is absent. One has his roommate, perhaps, and others whom he knows well—possibly a group with which he eats regularly—but, after all, he has not a well established fellowship to fall back on when in trouble.

There is always a certain number of undergraduates who live at home or with relatives or friends. They have of course all the advantages of an intimate home life. Their existence is usually better ordered than that of other students; the opportunities for concentrated study are much greater; and

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they have the benefits of parental advice and family comforts. The principal drawback is the fact that frequently they fail to make the effort necessary to mingle sufficiently in the current of university life. The burden of academic work, the domestic duties, and the social affairs connected with home life combine to fill the individual's time.



## CHAPTER V

### ATHLETICS

IN considering the intense interest of undergraduates in organized athletics it will perhaps be worth while to distinguish the more deep-seated causes from those which originate in the confused and transitional character of contemporary American life. Play is so universal a phenomenon that some believe it to be based on a specific instinct. More recently social psychologists have inclined to the view that it is a type of behavior universally developed in the course of the human being's endless groping for self-expression. At all events, play is a part of human nature. In temperate or cold climates it is almost certain to manifest itself in sports and games involving bodily exercise. The so-called Nordic peoples, in whose life our American social heritage finds its chief source, early developed a delight in these pastimes. From the Viking to the Vermont farmer there is a continuous history of contests of skill and strength, often of a rough-and-tumble character. In the isolation of Great Britain this spirit of competitive recreation was never guided into military channels to the extent that it

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was in Continental countries. When transplanted to America, it continued to flourish, for pioneer conditions placed a premium on physical prowess and made welcome every opportunity for sociable gatherings such as those which games and contests of skill encouraged. Shortly after the middle of the last century there came, with the great increase in medical knowledge, a growing realization of the benefits of physical exercise which acted as a stimulus toward the development of these rude pastimes in a systematic way.

On this general and perfectly sound foundation the peculiar character of modern American life has raised a far-reaching and in many ways amazing athletic structure. In a little more than half a century organized athletics have grown from insignificance to enormous proportions. The record of this development might well form the basis of a character study of America, for it is as if we had raised a national monument, utilizing all the materials, designs, and handicraft most typical of our times. The disorganization of American life has inevitably entailed a return to human nature interests such as recreation, since institutional traditions have decreased in influence. Our commercialism has seized every opportunity to exploit the incipient tendency; externalism has found an object, interesting yet easy to understand, to feed upon; the cheap newspaper, serving as a reflection of the public's interest, has

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fixed and even heightened the rôle of athletics in our life by giving them great prominence; and the American genius for organization has guaranteed the efficient carrying out of the whole movement. Indeed, it is difficult to find any force or institution characteristically "modern-American" which has not had its share in bringing about the present emphasis.

Our colleges and universities were among the first sponsors of organized athletics and have ever been in the forefront of the movement. Strange as it may seem, at first glance, for universities to ally themselves with a general tendency of this type, the reasons are not far to seek. American students, differing little from the rest of the population, have had the added predispositions toward athletics of youth and much leisure without the restraining force of deep intellectual interest. The college authorities have usually encouraged the movement both because of their interest in physical fitness and because winning teams have served to attract students.

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Athletics as now conducted in our universities are sharply divided into two types—intramural and intercollegiate. The former was the first to develop and, however much its younger brother has overshadowed it during the past thirty years, it has continued to thrive. The separation has become so sharp that in many cases the two are under different

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administrative heads; but even where under the same supervision, intramural and intercollegiate athletics remain absolutely distinct in the minds of students.

Intramural athletics are less a product of the peculiar tendencies of our times than intercollegiate athletics. The former find their chief roots in the more fundamental and probably more permanent needs of university students, while the emphasis on the latter is largely due to the special tendencies of twentieth-century America. So far as the university is concerned, intramural athletics are simply an attempt to satisfy and encourage the desire of the ordinary student for competitive bodily recreation. All sorts of contests and tournaments are scheduled which individual students or specified kinds of groups may enter if they choose; much equipment and the officials are provided, and suitable trophies are awarded.

If the student desire for recreation and physical expression may be regarded as lasting rather than the transitory result of contemporary tendencies, so, too, may the principal subordinate motive of group prestige. This operates much more strongly in the case of fraternities and sororities than in the case of college classes, for the latter are commonly so large and heterogeneous as to have lost much of the group loyalty formerly characteristic of them. House groups are, however, anxious to achieve distinction

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by winning championships in the various sports and often urge reluctant members to participate. It is, nevertheless, generally true that a fraternity would prefer to have one man on the varsity basketball team than the interfraternity basketball championship.

The amount of individual prestige gained through intramural athletics varies from one institution to another, but it is usually not great enough to serve as a strong motive to participation. There are so many contests going on and the interest in them is so largely confined to the particular groups concerned that individual achievement usually secures scant general recognition. More prestige accrues to women on intramural teams than to men because there are commonly no women's intercollegiate athletics. The members of the class and sorority teams are the best athletes of their sex, whereas among the men all those who are not upon the varsity squads are regarded as second-raters. Nevertheless, athletics do not hold so prominent a place among the women as to make the desire for individual glory a principal reason for engaging in them. Though group prestige is often ardently desired, especially among the sororities, observers are of the opinion that the enjoyment of physical exercise and skill is the chief object in view.

The only evident indication of the special tendencies of our times in intramural athletics is the undue

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emphasis placed upon winning. It is natural to desire victory; but American externalism often leads the undergraduates to lay an altogether disproportionate stress on the obvious achievement as compared with the enjoyment of the contest itself. Intramural athletics are carried on more in the art spirit than most American undertakings but even here the influence of our besetting narrowness is apparent.

Just because intramural athletics are not fully expressive of the characteristic trends of contemporary life, little interest is shown in them as compared with intercollegiate athletics. The alumni and general public are not interested in particular classes or fraternities but in the whole university. The great crowds which gather to see intercollegiate games make the latter loom very large to the undergraduate. He is thrilled much more keenly by the thousands cheering their teams to victory than he could ever be by an intramural contest. The larger the group with which one stands, the greater one's enthusiasm, and the larger the place that the sport will occupy in one's daily round of speech and action. The prominent position assigned to intercollegiate athletics has resulted in long training periods during which athletes must practice several hours daily, and these, in turn, have served to keep this form of athletics constantly in the minds of undergraduates.

One of the strongest reasons for the inferior place

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which intramural athletics occupy lies in the lower standard of skill evidenced in them. Not only is the best material taken over to the varsity teams but there is slight training or practice in the intramural field to bring the material present to its highest efficiency. There is, therefore, little to attract any spectators outside of those who are personally interested in the games. Though in many ways this is an excellent thing, it detracts from the general student interest.

Almost nothing but praise can be found for the systems of intramural athletics now being developed in American universities. The men and women are given every opportunity for healthful exercise and recreation without being induced to utilize more time than the good of their scholarship would dictate. Already many institutions have succeeded in interesting more than half their students in some organized intramural sport, but one must realize that the average amount of time thus expended by an individual probably does not exceed fifteen hours a year. The great majority play seven or eight times on a class or fraternity team in one sport and that is all. There are not many practices and it is sometimes even difficult to get together a full team to play.

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Intercollegiate athletics present a different picture. Originally intended to permit the best ath-

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letes in one institution to test their skill a few times against those of other colleges, these contests were so completely in accord with the American desires for large organization and keen rivalry that they aroused increasing enthusiasm in the student body. Indeed, they soon became the high points of university life, the times which were looked forward to, and, when present, enjoyed with not a little revelry. The prominence of the games and the importance which came to be attached to winning them led the university authorities to secure highly trained and equally highly paid coaches whose chief duty was to turn out victorious teams. The standard of play was so improved by this means that graduates retained their interest in the games, especially football, and began to return periodically to witness them. Then the great American public commenced to follow the fortunes of the college teams in the sporting news and to demand admission to the football games. The result of all this has been great physical plants of buildings and grand stands, enormous outlays for athletic equipment, large staffs of coaches, intensive drilling of the players, and expensive trips with large squads of men. So keen is the desire to win athletic championships that all fair means at least are utilized in order to procure victory. The student body is trained in cheering and fired to enthusiasm by mass meetings. Every precaution is taken to see that the athletes themselves



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keep fit and maintain the standard of scholarship required. Other students help them with their lessons, and tutors are often hired for them in case their marks are dangerously low. For those who have to contribute to their own support jobs are found which will not encroach upon the hours reserved for athletic practices.

The desire to win championships has brought about a spirited competition among college coaches for promising high-school athletes. The performances of these youngsters are closely watched and elaborate methods of inducement have been evolved to secure them. One of the purposes of the interscholastic contests in various sports often held at the universities is to arouse the interest of these boys in the particular institution in question. Fraternities are asked to lodge the visitors and sometimes even to keep in touch with the best athletes among them afterwards, so that they will be flattered. Interested alumni often act as intermediaries in the process of persuading the young men to enter their Alma Mater. The bait they hold out is not, however, the academic prestige of the institution, but its athletic glory.

The expenses incidental to the intercollegiate program are largely met from the football gate receipts, which sometimes reach two-thirds of a million dollars in a season. It is no longer uncommon for crowds of more than eighty thousand spectators

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to witness a single game between two well-known institutions or for a team to play before three hundred and fifty thousand during a season. Such crowds not only necessitate large stadiums but they require a large staff to distribute the tickets, handle the funds and so on. Though college football is not in any real sense a commercial enterprise, this business organization gives it the appearance of being such. To the outside world almost the sole element which distinguishes it from professional baseball is the fact that the athletes taking part in the games are not paid.

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The outstanding athlete is unquestionably the most honored of all students, both by the undergraduates and the general public. So much space is devoted to him in the public press that he attains ten times more notoriety than the most illustrious professor. Among his fellows, his ability is the subject of lengthy and earnest conversation; he is elected to campus honorary societies,<sup>1</sup> is fêted, and becomes the recipient of other attentions from his admirers. The fact is simply that he represents achievement in a line of endeavor with which most Americans are heartily in sympathy. And his achievement is obvious, external, to be appreciated by all who care either to witness him in action or

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter VI.

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to read of his athletic exploits. His light is not, like that of his more intellectual brother, hidden under a bushel of public indifference and lack of understanding.

The prestige to be gained is, however, by no means the only incentive to participation in intercollegiate athletics. Most of the participants undoubtedly secure a good deal of satisfaction from the sports themselves in the way of self-expression and the feeling that they are giving themselves to a worthy cause. Contentment and a consequent harmony of life result, as well as an added sense of self-reliance and power. Then too there is a trace of joyful recreation in most intercollegiate sports. Baseball, hockey, tennis, and golf perhaps yield more enjoyment than the rest, but even here the joy is hardly untrammelled. The weight of responsibility as the representative of one's Alma Mater is never lifted from one's shoulders. To this is added in the cases of football, basket ball, crew racing, and track a long period of arduous practice and strict training which tends to rob the sports of their joy and to dull the sense of self-realization. Another incentive to participation is the desire to reflect glory on one's fraternity. The loyalty which these societies build up is often so strong and the rivalry between them so keen that members feel it a duty to do this if they can. Nor should we overlook the pressure of public opinion which is felt by those who

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are known or thought to have athletic ability. So intense is the student body's enthusiasm and so strong the emphasis on winning, that many undergraduates regard any one as a traitor to the faith who, possessing known abilities along these lines, does not try to develop them. A person who has once become athletically distinguished, even in high school, is not permitted to drop out. I have known fine football players who by their senior year in college were sick and tired of the game but who dared not fail to "go out" lest they be branded as "yellow" or quitters. Yet we must not, by stating other motives, minimize the importance of the desire for individual prestige. It frequently remains, I think, the chief driving force in football, basket ball, and crew racing, and is a very important consideration in the other collegiate sports.

As regards their effect on the physique of the players, intercollegiate athletics are usually beneficial. The exercise and the careful training rules help to build up strong and healthy bodies. There is a certain danger, however, in the let-down after graduation when the excess of physical activity suddenly ceases. Furthermore, medical men are stressing much less the supreme value of athletics to health. They recognize that sanitation, ventilation, regular hours, and a proper diet are much more important than violent physical exercise. An individual who walks briskly two or three miles a day

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need be nowise inferior to the star athlete from the point of view of health.

Intercollegiate athletics are also lauded for the mental and moral training which they give. In the words of the Chairman of the Princeton Board of Athletic Control: "Nothing is more important than that a boy should learn, during his formative years of college, to control and command his own powers, to focus them upon a single end, to mobilize them quickly and completely and yet to do so with a chivalrous regard for the rights of others and the rules of the game. This is a training, it seems to me, that lies at the heart of all development of an individual toward good and useful citizenship. Now it is possible in the classroom to preach all this to a boy, to show him the need and importance of it, but it is vital and imperative that he should have something like a laboratory training in carrying out the precepts we give him. College sport furnishes such a laboratory."<sup>2</sup> That there is something in this point of view cannot be questioned. Mental alertness and valuable moral qualities are no doubt developed on the athletic field. But I wonder if the quickness of perception, determination, loyalty, and willingness to sink self in the best interests of the group which these sports are believed to cultivate

<sup>2</sup>From a speech by Dr. Charles W. Kennedy entitled "The Administration of College Athletics" and delivered before the National Collegiate Athletic Association, Dec. 30, 1924.

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need stress in men of college age? They have been taught by the family and play group since early childhood and practically all the intercollegiate athletes have gone through the character-forming process of high-school athletics. If these men have not developed the mental and moral qualities under discussion by the time they reach a university it seems to me that they are not likely to acquire them thereafter.

Moreover, intercollegiate athletics have not always been conducted in such a manner as to mold character in desirable ways. The external control of the referee is often emphasized more than the self-control of the player. The habit of dependence on some one else for the enforcement of principles of fair play is a dangerous one. In the past many coaches have taught that anything was "all right" which the players could "get away with"; which, of course, gave the worst possible preparation for lives of service. Even to-day many coaches will intentionally ignore the fact that some of their players have violated the amateur rule by playing summer baseball for pay. Indeed, though much has been said of the inspiring leadership of college coaches and the fine specimens of manhood they have developed by their example, it seems probable that, in the past at least, their protégés have been but slightly benefited by their influence. It cannot be denied, however, that there are now many fine per-

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sonalities among the coaches and that their number is increasing yearly.

Of this whole situation a caustic but perhaps overzealous and slightly unfair critic has said: "We aver that football engenders courage, teaches fair treatment of opponents, develops backbone and will power, which is all buncombe. It does not do any of these things. Fewer heroes are recruited from football fields than from factories, and the man who displays signal courage or bravery when it is called for is more likely to have spent his spare time in college reading Keats and Beaudelaire than charging upon the gridiron and breaking opponents' ribs."<sup>3</sup> When so much is being said about the moral value of college football, it is refreshing to find an iconoclast who, if he goes too far in his criticism, nevertheless brings us up standing and compels us to give the matter rational thought.

Even if we admit that intercollegiate athletics have value as mental and moral training, it is a question whether the distraction from the main purpose of the university which they entail does not produce mental and moral habits which more than offset it. All professors know that many football players cannot be expected to do much academic work during the fall.<sup>4</sup> Besides the afternoon prac-

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Collins, *The Doctor Looks at Love and Life* (New York, 1926), p. 115.

<sup>4</sup> The Chicago study showed that during the Autumn quarter

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tices there are "blackboard talks" in the evening at which formations are discussed and faults pointed out. The player thinks football most of his waking hours and has little inclination, even if he has the energy, to study. Baseball, basket ball, crew, and track men are only slightly less preoccupied. The result is more often than not slipshod, if passing, scholarship. The temptation to let others, who are willing to help an overworked athlete, write theses, do problems, and give unjustifiable aid even to the point of taking examinations for him has sometimes been too strong. In a sense many undergraduates regard athletes as exempt from the ordinary moral code. The latter are thought of as giving so much to their Alma Mater that it is only right that their academic path be smoothed for them in every way possible. Even if there is no dishonesty, bad habits of letting work "slide" and of trying to "bluff" the professor are apt to develop. But even more harmful is the distorted view of life which the star athlete secures. It is only human to believe that the activity for which others are praising and admiring one is of supreme significance. It is often not until several years after graduation that the athlete realizes how ultimately unimportant a long run for a touchdown is. Meanwhile he has developed the

81 per cent of the football players as contrasted with 53 per cent of all male students spent less than 40 hours a week in connection with their courses. *Report of the Faculty-Student Committee on the Distribution of Students' Time* (Chicago, 1925), p. 33.



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habit of striving after obvious position and immediate renown instead of trying to broaden and enrich his mind.

However, these harmful mental and moral tendencies do not always, by any means, accompany the desirable lessons of courage, resourcefulness, persistence, and sportsmanship, taught on the athletic field. Certainly many men escape them entirely. But it is probably not putting it too strongly to say that the members of major teams who do their academic work honestly, conscientiously, and enthusiastically, and who keep the proper perspective in regard to athletics are in a decided minority. The ones who come through unscathed are stronger for the ordeal; those who have not retained a spotless intellectual integrity through it all are probably more harmed than benefited.

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If the influence of intercollegiate athletics in their present form on the participants is often of doubtful value, there is still more question concerning their effect on the student body. Two things can be said in their favor. First, they provide an outlet for the excess of energy, for the exuberance of spirits of the undergraduate. Many people believe that were it not for these colorful events in student life there would be much more dissipation of one sort and another. Impulses which might otherwise re-

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sult in undesirable conduct are released in "pep" meetings, in cheering at the games themselves, and so on. The validity of this contention is cast into grave doubt, however, by the fact that more drunkenness accompanies a football game than is in evidence at any other time in the course of the academic year.

In the second place, since there is no common devotion to learning, intercollegiate athletics supply the only truly unifying force of any strength in our large universities. Because in this field alone there is that active competition with other universities so necessary to a strong "we" feeling, athletics are largely responsible for the loyalty felt towards Alma Mater. The teams are the principal symbols of the institution's unity; they are important in building up ideals of service and unselfish devotion.

Turning to the debit side of the ledger, it is immediately apparent that this centralization of student thought in an institution that is not immediately connected with the chief aim of the university has its grave drawbacks. Though a certain amount of time is sure to be wasted in idle gossip, the discussion of athletics overleaps all bounds and constitutes a positive distraction from study. Around the dinner table, in one another's rooms, walking to and from classes, the students seem to regard the team's make-up, its powers, and its chances in the next game or for the championship as topics of great

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importance. Those not in touch with the situation would marvel at the prolonged discussions among the men of the relative merits of different coaches and the distinctive capacities of star players. The normal interest is greatly heightened during the football season and especially during the week-ends when the team is playing at home. These are periods of great excitement, when the ordinary student is under a nervous tension as well as the athlete. Studies are usually forsaken in favor of moving pictures, dances, and other forms of diversion which require no serious and connected thought. Many students regard the occasion as one which calls for drinking of an uncommon order. This is even more likely to be true of that increasing number which accompanies the football team to foreign fields. The consciousness of their freedom from both faculty and parental control coupled with the excitement of the occasion encourages indulgence. That alumni often aid and abet the consumption of intoxicants by undergraduates both when the team is playing at home and at games abroad is common knowledge.

Contrary to what is frequently claimed, intercollegiate athletics do not seem to awaken in the average student a desire to take more exercise himself. Rather, they appear to accustom him to taking his exercise vicariously. As one critic has well said: "The real value of an athletic contest may be meas-

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ured by a fraction whose numerator is the number of players and whose denominator is the number of watchers present or absent. As the latter increases the game degenerates into a sport, the sport into a spectacle, and the spectacle into a gambling device.”<sup>5</sup> Cheering thousands on the bleachers during games and hundreds of onlookers at daily practices do not mean strong bodies. They point to a great interest in the athletic performances of others which very seldom carries with it any emulative desire.

Without question the greatest harm flowing from the place which athletics hold in student life is the erroneous viewpoint obtained by undergraduate students. When freshmen arrive at a university they find athletics the chief topic of conversation and football and baseball stars the idols of the campus. The externalism of the general American life which they bring with them is not mitigated as one would wish, but remains unassailed, becomes fixed, even augmented. The worship of athletic and all other obvious, immediate, and ultimately unimportant achievement only serves to delay the day when we can hope for a great increase in intellectual interest among our students. Until the stream of suggestion pouring over these entering freshmen is purified and the detrimental elements filtered out, we

<sup>5</sup> E. E. Slosson, *Great American Universities* (New York, 1910), p. 505.

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can hardly expect to develop intellectually healthy young men and women.

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One of the chief arguments made in behalf of great football spectacles in huge stadiums is that alumni are thus encouraged to return to their Alma Mater and are stimulated to maintain their interest. That a great many of them do attend games is certain; but whether the interest thus kept alive extends itself to anything other than athletics is a difficult question. The fact that alumni magazines have to devote a large share of each issue to athletics in order to keep up their circulation would seem to indicate that the desire to see the athletic contests themselves rather than any feeling for the university as a center of learning was the dominant motive in the minds of alumni. It has often been noted that the athletic and academic sides of a university are not closely linked in most older people's minds. "The interest of many an alumnus in the team of his college is really no more academic than that of the Chicago man in the 'Cubs' and many a father holds forth upon his son's performances at college exactly as he would upon those of a promising three-year-old in his stable." <sup>6</sup> However, it may well be true, and probably is to some extent,

<sup>6</sup> Frederick P. Keppel, *The Undergraduate and His College* (Boston, 1917), p. 162.

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that the loyalty to the institution which is kept alive by football and similar sports unconsciously builds up a desire to be of service in other fields, to further the university's intellectual aims.

Since intercollegiate athletics are the feature of our universities best known to the American public, they do much to form the general opinion of our institutions of higher learning. Many people never read of Harvard or Ohio State or the University of California except in the sporting news. Quite naturally they suppose athletics to occupy an even more important place in student life than they actually do. If these individuals have preconceived ideas of what a university should be, they are likely to think that the present institutions foster play and idling rather than learning, and they are apt to take a hostile position towards them. If, on the other hand, they have no standards by which to judge our universities, they receive a completely wrong conception of what a true university is. They may even think that its main purpose is the production of winning football teams. In either case, the situation is deplorable, since it makes impossible the assembly of the best minds in a truly scholarly atmosphere. And that is what our country direly needs.

One further word in defense of the present system of intercollegiate athletics should be said. College sport at present is the stronghold of amateurism in America. It is largely to our institutions of higher

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education that young lads must look and their elders point for a conspicuous example of the true sporting spirit. Most of the participants in other prominent athletic events are professionals. Though these individuals undoubtedly perform service to society, their point of view with regard to sport is not the ideal which we wish to bring before the young. The latter should be trained to a desire to enjoy healthful games for their own sake, not for any pecuniary gain. Having college athletics so securely entrenched in the public mind serves to procure this result.

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Faculty members have recognized more clearly than any other group the growing evils of intercollegiate athletics because to them has been entrusted the task of tending the sacred fires of learning. As soon as the athletic interest began to encroach upon academic work, many teachers sounded the warning. For example, "The Association [of American Colleges] desires to put on record its disapproval of the evident tendency to over-emphasize the spectacular features of intercollegiate athletic sports. . . . The intense rivalries and the excessive demands of the public have laid upon the colleges a strain to which they ought not to be subjected."<sup>7</sup> And Lord Bryce, who knew America

<sup>7</sup> *Bulletin of the Association of American Colleges*, viii (1922), No. 2, pp. 9-10.

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better perhaps than any American, pertinently said: "This is a strange inversion of what might be expected in a high civilization, and a strange perversion of the true spirit of university life. It is not an encouraging symptom. It reminds one of that inordinate passion for the sports of the amphitheatre, and especially for chariot racing, which grew more and more intense with the decadence of art and literature and national spirit in the Roman Empire. What does civilization mean, except that we realize more and more the superiority of the mind over the body?"<sup>8</sup> But the protests have been ineffectual in stemming the tide of popular enthusiasm. The requirement of one year of residence before participation in intercollegiate athletics and the establishment of a minimum scholarship average below which athletes may not fall with impunity are the principal concessions which the faculties have been able to secure. The opposition appears to be increasing, however, and we may soon expect it to achieve sufficient power to enforce more drastic reforms.

Those seeking to change matters for the better find the present coaching system particularly objectionable. The Purdue Committee on Improvement of Scholastic Attainment recently stated: "The plain, unmistakable truth of the matter is that there

<sup>8</sup> James Bryce, *University and Historical Addresses* (New York, 1913), p. 241.



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is no possible hope of coping with the evils of professionalism and of the unhealthy overgrowth of college athletics unless we remove the cause at its foundation. This cause, your Committee believes, is principally to be found in the present system of hiring athletic coaches and in placing the principal emphasis upon the winning of games and college championships.”<sup>9</sup> In much the same vein is ex-President Meikeljohn’s opinion of coaches: “These outsiders, demanding for ten weeks’ work salaries twice those paid to our best professors for a year—these outsiders make the rules of the game, dominate the play, and substitute for our games annual contests between themselves.”<sup>10</sup> The same authority favors the abolition of the Boards in Control of Athletics as well, saying: “It has done in the way of enlarging the scope of athletic management what no undergraduate board would have ever dreamed of doing or being allowed to do. It has built Stadiums, Coliseums, Bowls; it has brought the gate receipts of a team for a season into the hundreds of thousands of dollars. In a word, it has over-managed our college games, has given them the money and the public place from which every other type of exaggeration inevitably comes.”<sup>11</sup> After all, the

<sup>9</sup> *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors*, March, 1924, p. 43.

<sup>10</sup> “For Athletic Disarmament,” *Amherst Graduates Quarterly*, May, 1922, p. 172.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 171.

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natural thing would be for students to coach and manage their own teams. A professional trainer and a financial adviser would be all the assistance needed if public interest had not become so great.<sup>12</sup>

Whatever the means, the object to be attained is a more rational adjustment of aims and interests in student life. The athletic program must take its proper place, which, in a university, means a subordinate place to the academic program. The good points in the present intercollegiate athletic system are not inseparable from the bad. It should be possible through the adoption of carefully considered plans to eliminate the one while preserving the other. The spectacular character of football games is undoubtedly the cause of the majority of the evils now noted in connection with the system. If gradual action, which is designed to lessen the emphasis on football, can be undertaken in concert by many universities, an excellent start would be made in the amelioration of conditions. There is no need for the complete abolition of these contests unless athletic authorities and athletically enthusiastic alumni block the road to improvement by refusing to make any concessions. What we are aiming toward and what, I think, must inevitably come is the close association of intercollegiate athletics with, and its de-

<sup>12</sup> For a sane discussion of the evils of intercollegiate football and possible remedies see: "Intercollegiate Football: A Report by Committee G," *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors*, xii, April, 1926, p. 218.

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pendence on, an intramural system, both of which will hold a recognized place in student life without absorbing too much of the students' time and energy or attracting too much attention from outside. "Intercollegiate athletics should be to physical education or universal physical exercise and training what the prize essay is to the classes in rhetoric and composition; what the intercollegiate debate is to the classes in public speaking."<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> John Sundwall, "The Relation of Athletics to Physical Education," *Educational Review*, lxiii (1922), p. 198.

## CHAPTER VI

### CAMPUS ACTIVITIES

THE term "campus activities" is commonly used by American undergraduates to denote all those organized activities except athletics which, though closely connected with the university, are not an integral part of it. Student publications, musical, dramatic, literary, and oratorical societies, student committees, administrative positions of one sort and another, all are placed in this category. These represent lines of work, usually hard, conscientious work, in which students may engage during their spare time and from which they may draw some measure of benefit.

Campus activities have been a spontaneous growth and therefore, like fraternities and sororities, they furnish a key to the secrets of the undergraduate body of thought. Unlike intercollegiate athletics, the outside world has influenced them only to the degree that it has shaped the purposes and determined the interests of students.

One must not be misled into thinking that campus activities represent the viewpoint of a small minority simply because but relatively few take part

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in them. It must be remembered that in a large university some two-thirds of the students are prevented either by regulations or lack of time from doing so. In a university of nine thousand, eligibility rules which prevent all first-year students and all who have unsatisfactory academic records from participating would eliminate almost four thousand; and most of those working their way through the university, most of the intercollegiate athletes, and at least half of the professional students would have no time for these activities. As a matter of fact more than half of the three thousand students at such a typical university who might conveniently take part in campus activities would actually do so. Some of the remainder have tried out for an organization in which they are interested, like the band, and failed to make good. Many more have intentions of "going out" for something another semester when their academic work is on a more secure footing, or their recreations less pressing. In general it may be said with certainty that the majority of undergraduates sympathize with the campus activities and that most of those who are not now participating in them would like to be if circumstances permitted

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The motive which led undergraduates to organize most of these activities and the one which perhaps still plays the foremost rôle in their support is the

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desire for self-expression. Those who have journalistic, dramatic, or other interests find a means of developing along these lines. But the type of self which demands expression is a product of the contemporary American milieu. Superficiality and externalism in the general life make for undergraduates with interests of an intellectually shallow sort. Managing a baseball team or being a solicitor of advertising for the college paper is more interesting to most undergraduates than the study of chemistry or history. Thus self-expression has meant opportunities for activity outside the curriculum. The American genius for organization, taking hold of the problem, has brought forth an elaborate system of organizations and yet one which is essentially democratic. In most cases the individual has ample opportunity for asserting his individuality and contributing his share to the evolution of the system.

One of the most powerful incentives to participation in campus activities is conformity. It has become the thing to do, if one has the time. To the person who is eager to assert himself and who has no strong interest in scholarship, campus activities are the line of least resistance. But, more than that, a man is looked upon as a slacker in many quarters if he does not devote himself to what the undergraduates call the service of his university—that is, athletics and activities. Freshmen are exhorted to take part as soon as they are able; fraternity sophomores

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are often practically forced to do so. The attitude of a typical student body in this matter is clearly shown by the words which precede the section devoted to these organizations in the 1923 Michiganensian, senior yearbook: "We owe our praise to those who gave their best to Michigan." With a distressing shallowness of perception American students regard the participant in extra-curricular activities as highly altruistic in comparison with the deep scholar. The former is thought of as denying his selfish interest in unselfish devotion to the common good; the latter, as working wholly for himself. And this despite the fact that many a student engaged in campus activities is working solely for his own glory, while, on the other hand, the truly educated graduate constantly reflects credit on his Alma Mater. The defect in student thought on this subject is simply one of near-sightedness. Student editors, actors, and orators serve their university here and now; the scholars, in later life.

So widely diffused is the idea that extra-curricular activities are the principal interest in university life that entering students come with this point of view. An English youth traveling in America has stated the contrast with the situation in his native country as follows: "The student not only gets something different, he expects something different. In England you go to a university to develop yourself, while in America you go to a

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university to distinguish yourself. There you have a wealth of difference. In America a boy is always endeavoring to gain some outward sign of achievement, to make the college paper, to make one of the clubs or fraternities, to make the football team. The center of gravity is in the world of action much more than in the world of thought.”<sup>1</sup>

For many university men and women who have not been asked to join house groups and who have not had their need for sociability satisfied in other ways, campus activities offer opportunities for pleasant social intercourse. The contacts thus made are many and interesting. All types of individuals are gathered together on the staffs of the publications, in the membership of the glee club or a debating society, and lasting friendships often result. As one who worked for three years on a student publication, I should say that the chief benefits to those who have no journalistic aspirations are the acquaintances made and the broadening of character produced.

Undoubtedly many students enter into campus activities because they feel that such work is more likely than scholarship to develop the qualities they will need in later life. This belief is a very common one and is frequently supported by imposing statistics. Those who hold this view are able to show that Phi Beta Kappa students have a much

<sup>1</sup> William Robson, "Open Doors," *Survey*, 1 (1924), p. 490.



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smaller annual income ten years after graduation than the leaders in athletics and campus activities. However, this line of reasoning has two serious weaknesses. In the first place, income is not an accurate indication of the social value of the individual; that is, of true success in life. Teachers are notoriously poorly paid as compared to those in commerce and industry, yet their service is probably as great. Their love of their work and other non-pecuniary considerations make them reject chances to earn more money in less congenial occupations. As a matter of fact, several sets of statistics have been compiled showing that the scholar of high standing has a far better chance than his unscholarly fellow of getting into *Who's Who*—a standard of success much superior to income. But even if we assume that income represents in some degree social value, it does not follow that extra-curricular activities have been the chief cause of the success in later life of the outstanding athlete, the college editor, and the president of the student council. The prevailing sentiment is such in undergraduate life that those with energy and initiative center their attention not on scholarship but on athletics and campus activities. The natural leaders are drawn into these fields and scholarship is left, for the most part, to those of less generalized capacity. The men and women who become eminent are those with unusual natural endowment and

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home training. They would probably achieve success in later life no matter how they spent their collegiate years. Very likely extra-curricular activities aid in their development; but it is by no means certain that serious effort in scholarly fields would not benefit them still more. We do not know because such individuals rarely make scholarship their main aim in college. The dominant stream of suggestion carries them another way.

It is perhaps worth while to notice in passing that injustice is done many winners of Phi Beta Kappa when they are lumped together as "greasy grinds" who have no interests except their studies. A recent investigation has proved that they engage in activities quite as often as do their less scholastically eminent fellows,<sup>2</sup> though perhaps they do not so frequently hold the offices most esteemed by undergraduates.

In as much as campus activities are the vogue among students, the outstanding figures in them achieve considerable prestige. Like the athletes, but usually in less degree, they receive the homage of their fellows. Behind this, of course, lies the American interest in the obvious, the external. The deep scholar has little to show in a tangible way for his labors, while the class president or student orator has quite evidently attained a position of power. He is a doer, not a mere bookworm, and that is

<sup>2</sup> *Michigan Chimes*, viii (1926-7), No. 7, p. 1.

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enough to elevate him in the American mind. Randolph Bourne finds another interesting explanation. He believes that the undergraduate's "homely latent philosophy is essentially a sporting philosophy, the good old Anglo-Saxon conviction that life is essentially a game whose significance lies in terms of winning or losing. . . . The point is that such a philosophy is as different as possible from that which motivates the intellectual world of the modern college, with its searching, its hypotheses and interpretations and revisions, its flexibility and openness of mind. In the scientific world of the instructor things are not won or lost. His attitude is not a sporting one." <sup>3</sup>

As we should expect, the prestige enjoyed by the holders of high positions in campus activities serves as a stimulus for others to participate in them. Though few actually secure much recognition, many are encouraged to try. The desire to be elected to one of the campus honor societies is a further incentive. These organizations are an interesting outgrowth of the prominent place campus activities and athletics hold in university life, being composed of those who have been successful in these endeavors. Nearly every university possesses a number of these groups, the most famous perhaps being the senior societies at Yale. Some of them are in the nature of professional fraternities—journalistic, dramatic

<sup>3</sup> *Education and Living*, pp. 224-225, 226.

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and so on—while others do not confine themselves to one sort of activity but aim to secure the cream from all lines of work. As their names indicate their chief purpose is to confer prestige, and that is accomplished when the initiation ceremony is finished. Composed of men and women not unknown, the grouping together of them into one organization adds to the glory of each. It is true that these societies stress the ideal of service and occasionally coöperate with the university authorities in carrying out its policies, but their effect both on the university and their members is usually negligible. They do not, in most instances, further intimate friendships because they meet infrequently and because they are usually confined to juniors and seniors whose student companions are already chosen.

It may seem that students are inordinately fond of prestige. Not only do they participate in many activities wholly or largely for the sake of the glory to be gained, but they foster campus honor societies which add further to the renown of those who have distinguished themselves already. It is probable, however, that the desire is little stronger in university students than in any other group of the same age. It is just that the circumstances are such as to afford the desire comparatively easy satisfaction and thus give it more prominence. The university world is a small community, the members of which

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have many interests in common. Undergraduates agree rather closely on what things are worth while and they honor the men and women who accomplish them. Standards are thus set and he who wishes to become prominent knows how to go about it. In other walks of life the path to distinction is not so clearly marked.

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Work of an administrative character is entered into more for the sake of prestige than are the other types of campus activities. Those seeking class offices, athletic managerships, places on the student council, or prominent positions in a college "Union" have hardly any other aim in view. Though the motives of service to the university and interest in the work may be present to some extent, they are relatively unimportant. The number of such prestige-giving positions is legion. If places on "junior prom" committees, honor committees, Y. M. C. A. councils, and the like are included there would be some 400 of them in a large university. Prestige accrues to the holders of these positions because the student body is interested in the activities over which they have control. Participation benefits the individual only in the sense that it gives him business experiences and trains him to coöperate with his fellows. Those who attain these posts already have a large acquaintance among students so that the

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offices rarely have much effect in broadening their outlook.

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The student publications also afford a field for the operations of prestige seekers, both because the names of staff members are constantly before the public and because little initial talent besides a willingness to work hard and follow instructions is necessary for success. Although editors and business managers often achieve more fame than class officers, the student publications do not attract so many mere aspirants to notoriety as do the administrative positions discussed because of the really arduous labors involved. Probably not more than a third of those working on the publications in a large university are aiming primarily to become well-known members of the student body. Many of these cases are due quite as much to the coercion of house groups who wish to shine in their members' reflected glory as to the initiative of the individuals themselves.

It seems likely that well over half of the men and women engaged in this sort of work are really interested in it and feel that they are expressing themselves. They are either planning to make journalism or literary production their career, or they are anxious to discover how well fitted they are to do so. Perhaps the greatest service which the publications perform for their staff members is that they

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afford a proving ground where prospective reporters, editorial writers, advertising men, and embryo fiction writers, essayists, and poets can test out their merits. Also, the experience gained in such work is of value irrespective of the selective process which it embodies. Three years of constant application to journalistic problems or literary pursuits is a large asset in later work of the same sort even though the situations be very different. The beneficial effects are not confined, however, to those who ultimately enter upon the careers. The training in coöperative effort, in responsibility, care in small things like punctuality and accuracy, must not be overlooked.

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As compared with the student publications, there is usually a greater proportion of the participants in musical and dramatic activities who are vitally interested. Except in the case of the members of the cast, chorus, and committees of the annual college "operas," almost all those in glee clubs, bands, and dramatic organizations take delight in the chance to express their individuality. They have more or less talent, and like to use it. These activities possess little prestige in student life so that there is little incentive for the indifferent to take part. The absence of glory is largely attributable to the facts that most of these organizations are in the public eye but two or three times a year and that they are

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generally of such a nature as to make the participants in them seem simply units in a whole rather than distinctive individuals. Of the seven hundred men and women in these activities at the University of Michigan not more than a dozen achieve any prominence whatever and half of these are leading characters in the Michigan Union opera who usually have little genuine interest in acting. The failure of students to admire these individuals may be due, in part, to the tendency to regard the activities as of a recreational rather than a business character. There does not seem to be so great an element of untiring labor in behalf of the university. This belief is more or less well founded, especially with respect to the college operas. Here, although the routine is tiring, there is much opportunity for sociable intercourse and, often, travel. In fact, it is these things which chiefly attract the great number of candidates for these productions.

The value of musical and dramatic organizations to students is not inconsiderable. Most universities have several groups which present well-directed plays of a high character. The experience in acting and the familiarity with good drama are sources of lasting pleasure and benefit. The lighter operas provide opportunities for broadening one's understanding of human nature through contact, and the frequent trips taken by the companies have real educational value. Musical organizations also give



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students interested in them an excellent chance to develop the artistic side of their natures. The glee clubs, bands, and orchestras are usually in the hands of capable directors who do much to enhance the musical appreciation and guide the musical skill of their charges.

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It is rather curious that with all the emphasis on campus activities in our American universities there is so little interest in oratory and debating. Only one student in sixty, in a representative institution, cares enough about this form of activity to ally himself with one of the existing societies. It seems that general conditions of American life share the responsibility for this with certain conditions in the university environment. The cheap newspaper has largely done away with political oratory. Americans nowadays form their opinions on current issues by reading press accounts of party programs and interviews with political leaders. Moreover, the sort of questions before the people in the twentieth century is of a more intellectual and less emotional turn than twenty-five, fifty, or a hundred years ago. The problems are highly complex and technical, not simple and ethical. Fluent oratory is not the priceless possession it once was. No longer can the mere spellbinder number his ardent followers by the millions. The decline of interest in and admiration of gifted speakers is reflected in university life. More-

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over, from within there works a subtle influence in the form of a changing type of student body. Interest in matters intellectual has declined and debating has suffered because it requires more or less the same type of work as classroom preparation. It is shunned by the majority who want a change to more superficial things in their leisure hours. I have also heard the explanation offered that students in intercollegiate debating no longer secure much chance for self-expression because the teams are so carefully coached that the whole performance is cut and dried. Finally, the whole procedure is distrusted nowadays because many believe it distorts rather than reveals the truth. All these influences would be set at naught if the debater received marked recognition among his fellows. But he does not. Because of the lack of intellectual interest among college students and because of their ignorance on vital social issues, debates have little appeal in a university community.

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Fraternity and sorority members are better represented in intercollegiate athletics and campus activities than independents. For instance, statistics at the University of Michigan show that from 42 to 43 per cent of the house group members participate, as compared with 12 to 13 per cent of the independents. This situation is not surprising, however, when the factors at work are considered.

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Since the proportion of men and women who support themselves is much greater among independents, they have less time on the average to devote to this sort of thing. Then too, new members of house groups are frequently chosen on the basis of their actual or potential accomplishment in non-academic lines of work. Prominent high school and preparatory school athletes in particular are almost always given chances to join fraternities. Men who gain prestige in this or other fields at the university are also likely to be taken in at any time during their college career. House groups are eager to augment their prestige by adding to their membership any individuals who become prominent on the campus. A third reason is the way in which house groups encourage their members to go out for various activities. As was observed earlier, these societies often have narrow views as to the sort of extra-curricular work which is most creditable, but this does not lessen the pressure brought to bear to interest their members in the ones approved. Often the older members help the younger to get started in their chosen activity and so give the under-class fraternity and sorority members a decided advantage over their independent brothers and sisters. Observers note a salutary change creeping into house group life at this point. Freshmen and sophomores are being told less frequently than in the recent past that to "go out" for some activity is their duty to the group.

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The charge has frequently been made that campus activities are selfishly controlled by small cliques of house group members. This is undoubtedly true in some universities, and not in others. Appearances are apt to mislead one, however. Since fraternity and sorority members engage more in these organizations than independents, it is natural that they should control most of them.

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In most coeducational universities the women do not participate as much in campus activities as do the men. The reasons for this spring from the different position in society women have always held. Only within the last fifty years has it been considered necessary or proper for women to receive the benefits of higher education. They were frowned upon as intruders by most of the male students when they first began to attend universities and this feeling, though decreasing, is by no means extinct yet. Hence women have been more or less timid about asserting themselves in student circles, fearful of incurring greater resentment. The fact that campus activities are linked quite closely in the minds of students with the ability to mix easily with business associates in later life strengthens the notion that the interests of women are not as compatible with campus activities as are those of men. Though many, perhaps the majority, of university women

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plan on supporting themselves after graduation, the career which they have most frequently in view is teaching, a profession to which campus activities seem to have almost no relation.

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The question of whether campus activities are a good influence on their participants must be looked at from the relative point of view. That practically all of them are beneficial cannot be doubted. But are they taking the place of or encroaching upon better means of development? Could we with reason expect that the time spent on student publications, dramatics and so on would not be wasted or frittered away in less valuable occupations, if these organizations did not exist? When we consider the superficial, external point of view of most college students I think the answer must be in the negative. Most of them would devote no more time to the more highly intellectual pursuits of learning than they now do, even if they were barred from all campus activities. The chief exceptions to this generalization are students who spend an exorbitant amount of time in extra-curricular work. Such are many of the workers on college dailies, almost all candidates for athletic managerships, and those who try to engage in two or more activities. These men and women are frequently desirous of studying or reading more but are prevented by the many

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responsibilities with which they have foolishly burdened themselves. A method which has been widely adopted to forestall this overparticipation is the "point" system. Under this system each extra-curricular position is assigned a certain number of points according to the demands it makes upon the participant's time and energy, and each person is limited to a set maximum of points.

The degree of profit derived from campus activities varies widely. Long competitions for athletic managerships, the securing of advertising for student publications, committee meetings relative to freshmen being compelled to wear their caps, and endless rehearsals for college operas would not be assets at all were it not that most students would "loaf" otherwise. Better things may be said, however, for the work of musical organizations, societies producing fine drama, literary groups of one sort and another, and debating clubs. These would be justified even if students had far more intellectual interest than at present.

So far I have considered the value of campus activities to the students of the present day. Their value to university life as a whole is a somewhat different problem. Though the inconsequential types of extra-curricular work may serve to keep non-scholarly students out of mischief, they aid in maintaining the externalism of American life within the university walls and retard the evolution toward a

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better state of student thought. Thus contemporary participants are benefited at the expense of the university men and women of the future. This criticism, though it only applies to a small number of campus activities, is a serious one, for the ones of which it is true are among the most prominent and the best known to the outside world. Hence the whole system of extra-curricular organizations and indeed the whole university are placed in an unfortunate light. New arrivals at the academic gates and prospective travelers thither are given a false impression of university life.

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It will be readily seen that I do not favor the plan suggested in several quarters that academic credit be given for all campus activities. If anything of the sort were to be done, a very stringent selection of activities should be made so that only the most intellectual and æsthetic would be included. Otherwise the academic standards of the institution would be dangerously lowered. But there is another cogent argument against such a step. Two of the greatest virtues of campus activities as now organized are their almost complete independence of outside control and their spontaneity. Students build, equip, and navigate their own ship. Once give university credit for this work and these organizations would become a branch of the

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university, closely supervised and controlled by the administrative authorities. Young people quite rightly wish to have at least one sphere where they may express themselves fully. Take campus activities out of this category and they will find other, probably less desirable, means of self-expression.

And yet some guidance of older heads in this matter is seriously needed. President Wilson's dictum that "the side shows are so numerous, so diverting—so important if you will—that they have swallowed up the circus, and those who perform in the main tent must often whistle for their audience, discouraged and humiliated,"<sup>4</sup> is still distressingly true. Eligibility rules which require a satisfactory academic standing before a student may participate in campus activities are a necessary but largely negative measure. Something positive in the way of inspiring leadership toward a greater interest in intellectual things both curricular and extra-curricular is direly needed. As intimated in a previous chapter, there are great opportunities for the development of more fruitful extra-curricular activities such as essay, short-story, and play writing, scientific research, drawing, painting, and architecture. The growth of such interests among students would be one of the greatest possible boons to American universities. Unfortunately, it is not altogether certain that faculties, many of whose members have helped to bring

<sup>4</sup> "What Is College For?" *Scribner's*, xlv (1909), p. 576.



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on scholarly apathy by mechanical methods of teaching, will be able to enlist student enthusiasm for means of self-expression of an intellectual sort. The task will probably have to be accomplished by the coöperation of those few teachers who are sincerely admired by their students and those few undergraduates who wish to promote a finer type of university life.

## CHAPTER VII

### RECREATION

THE recreational activities of university students may be conveniently classified under four heads: (1) games and sports, (2) enjoyment or entertainments, (3) reading, and (4) sociable mingling.

Sports and games characterized by bodily activity and skill are not confined among undergraduates to organized athletics. Undoubtedly the greatest amount of recreation of this sort is carried on spontaneously and quite apart from any formal system. The types of activity necessarily vary somewhat with the location of the university but everywhere games and sports of many sorts are indulged in. There is little reason to believe, however, that a large proportion of the undergraduates devotes more time to this sort of recreation than is desirable from the point of view of bodily and mental health and vigor.<sup>1</sup> On the contrary, it might be held that there is relatively too little

<sup>1</sup> Approximately 87 per cent of both men and women at Chicago reported less than 10 hours a week devoted to voluntary exercise. *Report of the Faculty-Student Committee on the Distribution of Students' Time* (Chicago, 1925), p. 65.

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physical exercise and too much recreation of a passive sort like attendance at moving pictures or baseball games. Foreigners have criticized Americans for being a nation of spectators rather than players, and there can be no doubt that this criticism is in some measure applicable to college students. Some observers also deplore the general trend away from the simpler forms of recreation, like hiking, toward the more sophisticated ones like golf.

The value of games and sports among undergraduates is principally recreational rather than disciplinary. The desirable mental and moral qualities which competitive athletics develop when pursued in a sportsmanlike manner are usually acquired before entrance to college, if at all. However, there are undoubtedly a few cases where alertness, persistence, self-reliance, loyalty, fair play, the graceful acceptance of defeat, generosity in victory are developed during the undergraduate period.

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Because of modern means of communication, inventions like the moving pictures, and the high per capita wealth of our country, the desire to be entertained is perhaps being more fully satisfied in present-day American life than ever before in the world's history. Men and women of all classes can afford to pay for amusement, they can reach

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the place of entertainment easily, and a greater variety of shows, spectacles, and so on can be offered. So common has it become to attend baseball games, moving pictures, popular lectures, and the like that the desire itself has been greatly stimulated. University students are like the rest of the population in this respect. Their appetite for public entertainment has been built up in their earlier years; and it shows but slight diminution under the influence of higher education.

The amount of interest among students in entertainments is perhaps not, however, as significant as the kind of entertainments they generally choose. Those types which appeal primarily to the higher powers of the mind, such as good drama, symphony concerts, and the more thoughtful lectures have a comparatively small following, while those which, like athletic contests and frivolous or sensual moving pictures, appeal to the grosser emotions and require little critical appreciation are very popular.

The underlying cause for this state of affairs is, of course, the contemporary preoccupation with the immediately stimulating rather than with the vital aspects of life. Undergraduates, brought up in this current of externalism and superficiality, have never had the opportunity of developing refined sensibilities. The ball game and the moving picture have been the chief sources of entertainment since early childhood, and the schools have done almost nothing

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to give them finer tastes. The better forms of music are not understood by young America; good plays strike but a few responsive chords; and there is little curiosity relative to lectures of a high order of critical or scientific thought.

With such a background it is but natural that undergraduates do not wish to exercise their minds unduly in their leisure hours. Though most of them devote all too little time to intellectual pursuits, they usually regard that little as enough and turn to amusements which require no intensity of thought. The moving picture and the athletic spectacle satisfy their wants. The members of a moving picture audience are in a passive, receptive state as far as ideas go, for usually the only mental stimulus is an appeal to the cruder forms of feeling and sentiment. The athletic contest, though it keeps the mind more active, does so almost wholly on the emotional side. This disinclination to exercise the truly intellectual faculties at entertainments is quite natural in the case of professional students who work their minds strenuously, but it is not equally excusable among the college men and women.

Moreover, the interest in the superficially stimulating results in the desire of most undergraduates to mix a degree of sociable intercourse with the entertainment itself. Being of an extremely friendly, a happily gregarious nature they prefer, other things being equal, an entertainment at which they can

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converse more or less freely with their companions. This, though quite impossible at lectures, concerts, and plays, is easily done at a moving picture performance and is practically demanded at a football or baseball game.

Of the entertainments available to the university student football games are by all odds the most popular. Probably 90 per cent of the men and women in our colleges and universities witness all the important games played at home.<sup>2</sup> So universal is this interest that it will be worth while to attempt to secure a deeper insight into the psychology of the matter. The contest is first of all one of physical strength and skill, a condition which appeals to the animal side of all our natures. Then there is subtle strategy—usually the coach's—running through the game and giving it added zest. Moreover, the sense that a bitter struggle is on, the realization that one is witnessing a miniature battle whets one's interest to a keener edge. These elements would be present if there were but one spectator who was quite disinterested in the outcome. But how much greater the excitement, how much sharper the tension when one identifies oneself with one of the competing teams and when the game takes place

<sup>2</sup>The University of Chicago study belies this statement, since 17.8 per cent of the men and 26.2 per cent of the women report no time spent watching football games. It seems to the writer that this would only be true in a university where a large percentage of the students commute. *Op. cit.*, p. 66.

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before thousands of spectators! There is something akin to self-expression in the experience of undergraduates at a football contest. Their team is a part of a vividly realized group self. The student body asserts itself by means of the team in no merely figurative sense. The partisan feels anger toward the opposing team or knows fear in the sensation called a "sinking heart." And to cap the climax the games are not played with the students only as witnesses. Thousands of alumni and other citizens flock to our seats of learning to watch the contests. The "mob mind" is produced in the mass of spectators and acts to intensify the feeling produced by other causes.

Why we crave such emotional stimulation is another question. Some lay it to the monotony of the business and factory life of our day. Although this may be arguable in the case of alumni and citizens, it is certainly not the answer in the case of students. My own opinion is that something quite the contrary is the cause. The young people of to-day have become so used to excitement through the automobile, dance halls, and amusement parks, that they feel a want if such excitement is lacking.

Moving pictures satisfy the desire for a slightly less stirring emotional experience. They combine restful passivity with a colorful but not too powerful appeal to the feelings. Situations playing upon the sex interest of the youthful spectators are the most

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common means of holding their attention and awakening their enthusiasm. But the emotional stimulus of moving pictures is by no means their sole drawing force. They furnish "something to do" for a host of restive young people. As long as they are not positively boring, they attract the undergraduates.

Added to the various other non-academic activities of students, these less intellectual forms of entertainment make serious inroads upon academic work. The undergraduates as a rule try to arrange their time so that they will be able to attend athletic contests, moving pictures, and dances, take physical exercise of some kind, do justice to any organizations to which they belong and at the same time keep up their studies. If any one of all this variegated jumble of activities has to be slighted, attendance at entertainments which serve no lasting purpose might well be the one. Yet it is often the studies which suffer. However, it is encouraging to note in this connection that observers at Michigan agree that the longer students remain in the university the more interest they show in the better forms of entertainment and the less in frivolous moving pictures.<sup>3</sup>

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The recreational reading of students gives us little more reason than their taste in entertainments

<sup>3</sup> Also attested by the Chicago study. *Op. cit.*, p. 70.



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to think highly of their intellectual interest. In the first place, they read very little on their own initiative—slightly more than an hour a day on the average.<sup>4</sup> But more significant than this, the things which they read are of no high type. Whether it be in books, magazines, or newspapers—among which three their time is about equally divided—their taste is open to criticism.

Perhaps the recreational reading which does students the least credit is that in magazines. Their favorites are periodicals dealing largely in light fiction like the *American*, the *Saturday Evening Post*, and the *Cosmopolitan*. Magazines of more literary merit like the *Atlantic*, *Harpers*, *Century*, and the *Nation* find very few readers. Still smaller is the appeal of those of an artistic or scientific character. Humor and moving picture magazines, on the other hand, seem to have an interest, for the men at least, quite out of proportion to their worth. The two redeeming features in respect to magazine reading are that students appear to waste little time on the salacious, vapid, utterly worthless type of periodical with which our drug stores are becoming littered, and that informational magazines like the *Literary Digest* and the *National Geographic* have many readers.

<sup>4</sup> This statement and all those following in regard to recreational reading are based upon a study the results of which are given in Appendix I, Table M.

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Besides the intellectual indifference which must be reckoned the chief cause of the students' failure to read the most substantial magazines, we must take account of the spirit in which periodical reading is usually undertaken. When a college man has a few minutes on his hands before an afternoon class or when he wishes to while away half an hour between dinner and his evening study, he will pick up a magazine. He is not looking for mental food, but for a mild mental intoxicant. He wants a racy story, some good jokes, or pictures of movie stars. He may be, and usually is, capable of enjoying better things, but at the moments when magazine reading is likely to occur to him he wishes to relax rather than to exercise his intellectual faculties.

Newspapers are read more by men than by women, probably because men are traditionally more concerned with the affairs of the world. Also the men seem to have slightly better judgment in selecting the parts to which they wish to devote their attention. Campus news does not seem to monopolize their interest to quite the same extent that it does the interest of the women and they pay more attention to political news and editorials. However, both men and women are too much wrapt up in the unimportant parts of the paper—men in sporting news, women in the women's page and society, and both in the comic strips. Perhaps the most hopeful indication revealed by my study is

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that college students do not take as morbid an interest in the sensational items dealing with divorce, murder, and vice trails, as do many Americans.

The student taste in books appears to be on a slightly superior level. Although they read very few besides those required in their courses, a large majority of them exercise some discrimination in their choice. Women who read but one book every three weeks for pleasure, and men who only do so every five would indeed be foolish if they wasted their time on trash. As a matter of fact most of them read a few of the best current novels and a detective story or two, with an occasional volume of classic fiction, of history, or biography thrown in. Above the general run are a small number, possibly one-seventh of the total, who read quite a number of excellent books; while below are a still smaller group the members of which read things in their leisure moments of no worth at all. It was one of the latter who naively wrote on my questionnaire: "I read very little real literature except by necessity."

The required reading in many courses, especially English literature, undoubtedly tends to decrease the number of books read for recreation and probably has some adverse influence upon their quality. Many men and women have told me that they were compelled to read so many serious works in preparation for classes that, if they did any book reading

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at all in their spare time, it was apt to be of an unsubstantial sort. It seems likely that books read voluntarily during vacations would be of a slightly better type for that reason. When not reacting against an overdose of scholarly treatises or deeply psychological novels, I believe that students, though they show slight interest in science, history, and biography, almost invariably keep away from fiction of the most inconsequential kind. Curiously enough their magazine taste is not, under the same conditions, similarly improved. The truth of the matter is possibly that a magazine has come to be looked upon as something to trifle with, something in which the advertisements are to be scanned almost as carefully as the reading matter, something to be picked up or laid down whenever the spirit moves one. Such a notion and the better type of magazines are incompatible. The student point of view in regard to books is quite different. They look upon the reading of a book as an undertaking as well as a pastime, and therefore pay some attention to the value of the volume.

The situation with respect to student reading needs no extended explanation. The haste, the superficiality, the externalism of American life are not conducive to the development of literary taste. Parents who are interested in automobiles, radios, and fraternal lodges neither stimulate their children to read nor guide them in the selection of

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books as parents did fifty years ago; many a boy or girl has an embryonic taste in things literary or poetical stifled by dogmatic and uninspired teaching of literature in high school; the young people have grown accustomed to such exciting pastimes that they can draw little pleasure from anything short of a detective story with a thrill on every page. In fine, the center around which our whole American life revolves is so far removed from such things as literary taste that the present condition is well-nigh inevitable. The universities have made little headway in bringing about a change in their students. But some word of praise is owed them for accomplishing what they have. Battling against intellectual indifference and the distractions incident to university life, teachers, fanning a tiny spark into flame now and then, find they have willing followers into the land of good literature. These "young intellectuals," as they are sometimes derisively called by their less intelligent brethren, read a large number of good books, peruse the best magazines, and follow the really significant events in the daily press. Though it is difficult to be certain, I am under the impression that this group is maintaining its numbers, if not growing.

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Under the head of sociable mingling comes a great part of the life of the undergraduate. Be-

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cause of the variety of contacts and the difficulty of setting them off as a separate whole, many of them have been discussed under other heads, such as home life, athletics, campus activities, and entertainments. It is therefore only a residue that will be taken up at this point.

There is no lack of informal mingling in sociable ways among undergraduates. A good deal of time is spent in congenial converse of one sort or another, time which might be utilized in the discussion of topics of genuine importance, but which is commonly devoted to matters of a rather trivial nature. Athletics, experiences with the opposite sex, matters connected with student organizations, and the relative merits of different types of automobiles are likely to be gone over at great length to the very general exclusion of science, literature, art, and momentous public issues. The situation is epitomized in what has been called by various names but which we may term a "session"—the gathering together for conversational purposes of a small group of intimates, usually late of an evening. There are few fraternities, men's dormitories, or rooming houses which do not see such sessions two or three times a week and probably nowhere does the undergraduate reveal his interests so completely. The discussion may turn on religion, ethics, or business opportunities for a while, but sooner or later athletics and sex assert their prior claim on the undergraduate mind and

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crowd out other topics. There is a force not unlike gravitation at work, a sort of inner necessity to revert to these subjects, for undergraduates cannot keep up a flow of thought on matters of real moment for long; but the springs of sex and athletics apparently never run dry. It need scarcely be added that the generally trivial character of the student conversation is at one with the apathy toward college work, the overemphasis on intercollegiate athletics and the fondness of the undergraduate for frivolous entertainment. The university is fashioned too much in the image of the larger American life for any one to expect a different situation.

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The extent of gambling among university men varies greatly from one institution to another. In general, I believe there is less of this form of diversion than in the immediate past and less of it in the coeducational colleges and universities than in those only for men. Gambling seems to be very nearly in inverse proportion to the number of opportunities to mingle in more or less exciting ways with the opposite sex, and never before have there been so many such opportunities as dances and automobiles now give.

Most fraternities have passed rules against gambling. Where these are fairly well enforced, as they often are, there is more gambling among inde-

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pendents than among fraternity men. Curiously enough, although similar rules exist in most house groups against drinking the same result does not ensue. In this instance the letter of the law—no drinking in the house—can be quite easily lived up to without the members being prevented from drinking. A dark corner in the yard, an automobile, or, in the spring, a quiet nook in the country will do. For gambling a suitable room is essential which, in the case of fraternity men, is difficult to find outside of their chapter houses.

The amount of drinking in various universities seems to be dependent on two factors, the traditional attitude of the students at the institution in question and the ease or difficulty of obtaining liquor. Since the passage of the Volstead Act the latter factor has come sharply into prominence. Universities which are within easy reach of cities into which great quantities of liquor are constantly being smuggled are more troubled with drinking than those farther from the centers of supply. Although the traditional factor is markedly different in the various student bodies I believe it has been changing in much the same direction in all since the passage of the prohibition amendment. When something which is common, cheap, and sanctioned by law suddenly becomes difficult to obtain, expensive, and illegal, it would be peculiar indeed if there were not some accompanying mental readjustment. In the case



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of college men and the younger generation generally the result has been somewhat as follows. A curiosity concerning this forbidden thing has arisen which demands satisfaction, and the secrecy necessary to securing it has lent a glamour to drinking formerly quite unknown. It is now a delightful adventure, an adventure which, because always more or less *sub rosa*, loses its charm slowly. Indulgence can scarcely ever be regular as it was for many students before prohibition; it must be periodic. College men, feeling therefore that they must take full advantage of opportunity, drink heavily once in a while, and consequently make greater fools of themselves than formerly. The change from beer to whisky and gin is of the same sort. The desire is to secure the maximum amount of intoxication possible on the occasion selected for celebration. The increase of drunkenness at dances, especially fraternity parties, is also in some measure due to the changed situation in regard to intoxicants. When one can indulge only periodically it is perhaps natural to make one's indulgence coincide with a time of more or less revelry. But there is an even more important consideration here. The breakdown of the old conventions with respect to women has made possible a lack of restraint among men utterly inconceivable twenty-five years ago. With the emancipation of women from their subordinate position has come a great decline in the

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feeling that men must protect women like tender flowers. As his comrade, man expects woman to face the realities of life. If a college student drinks at all, it is no great step for him to call on a young lady after taking a drink or two. And some of the women, moving with the spirit of the times, are not averse to indulging a little themselves, though, be it said, they usually do so quite moderately and inconspicuously.

The older generation is not blameless in the matter of increased drunkenness among the younger element. Many boys and girls have been led on by the example of their parents. And many a college man takes his first sip of intoxicating liquor at the suggestion of an alumnus who is celebrating a football victory in the fraternity house.

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One of the outstanding tendencies in American universities to-day is that to provide buildings designed to meet the recreational and social needs of students of each sex. These "Unions," as they are commonly called, often take on added functions such as the accommodation of alumni guests, and the serving of meals to parents, alumni, and visitors; but these are subsidiary. The equipment of a typical building for men includes a swimming pool, a cafeteria and soda bar, a periodical reading room, a selected library placed in another reading room,

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lounges, a billiard and pool room, bowling alleys, a large dance and assembly hall, numerous small dining rooms for society banquets, a number of committee rooms for the meetings of campus organizations, and a few private rooms for campus honorary societies. At Michigan the annual college opera is produced under the Union's auspices; large dances are held on Friday and Saturday nights; a body of junior and senior men who help and advise freshmen is organized by its officers; and the students in charge are always alert to arrange banquets, receptions, and meetings whenever a particularly important event or the presence of a distinguished person at the university makes such festivities desirable and opportune.

One of the main aims of these Unions is to bring together in a wholesome, democratic way all the persons of each sex on a university campus. By providing common means of recreation the authorities hope to make them unions in fact as well as in name. On the whole, this aim is fairly well realized. All sorts of men mingle in the cafeteria, the reading rooms, the swimming pool, the billiard and pool room, and the bowling alleys. The fraternity-independent gap is often not well bridged, however. The house group members, having plenty of opportunity for sociable intercourse with their "brothers," use the Union little except for meetings or other specific business.

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In discussing those recreations in which men and women mingle, I will confine myself to the co-educational university, as I do not feel competent to treat the very different conditions in other institutions.

The residence of large numbers of young men and women in close proximity cannot fail to give rise to much social mingling, especially when they are thrown together in the same classes. The great majority of students are between the ages of seventeen and twenty-four, the time of life when the appeal of the opposite sex is the most impelling. In seeking means of diversion together there seem to be two principal aims, to have as much privacy, and at the same time as much excitement, as possible. The former desire has probably been present from time immemorial; the latter has been enormously developed in the past few years by the automobile and other means of exciting recreation. Its universality is shown by the decline in the custom of merely calling on a young woman. Unless a couple are engaged they are rarely content to spend the afternoon or evening conversing in the parlor or even strolling together along shady walks.

Dancing is perhaps the most popular diversion of all. At Michigan approximately fifteen hundred of the nine thousand students attend the two principal dance halls weekly. Moreover, during an average year more than three hundred parties are given

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by house groups and various campus societies. One of the most striking features of the public, as contrasted with house, dances at any of our universities is the slight degree of mingling among the couples. Often a man and a woman spend practically the whole evening together. Thus the desire for privacy and intimate conversation is satisfied at the same time that the exhilaration of rhythmic movement, the "jazz" strains of the orchestra, the festivity of the occasion, and the physical proximity of the modern dance cater to the love of excitement.

The moving picture houses are also favorite resorts. The excitement in this case is much milder but "going to a show" constitutes "something to do" and is therefore preferable to staying at home. Other forms of entertainments such as plays given by campus dramatic societies and lectures are less popular, probably because there is little chance for conversation. The center of interest ceases to be the other person and becomes the players or the lecturer. The sentiment which is marked in most co-educational universities against the escorting of university women to athletic contests is interesting. It has apparently grown up because of a feeling that a man cannot do his part in cheering on his team if accompanied by a woman. The importance attached to victory in intercollegiate games is therefore at the bottom of the matter. And yet men may bring girls "from home" with impunity, the logic of

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this being, I suppose, that a man must be allowed to entertain a girl whom he sees rarely, though he may not similarly entertain one whom he can see every day.

Of the other forms of association between the sexes such as canoeing, horseback riding, skating, and so on, I will speak of only one, automobile riding. This diversion is becoming increasingly common as more and more students come to have the use of cars. The practice has the redeeming feature of keeping young men and women in the open air instead of in stuffy houses or moving picture theaters, but in some other respects its influence appears to be unwholesome. In pleasant weather rides can be enjoyed at any hour of the day; little expense is involved; and it is seldom difficult to secure a companion. The temptation being ever present and powerful, many succumb, frequently with disastrous effects to scholarship. Many institutions have deemed it best to prohibit the use of automobiles by undergraduates.

But of more importance is the influence of the automobile on the relations between the sexes. To this invention must be assigned much responsibility, I believe, for the change, amounting almost to a revolution, which has come about during the last fifteen years in the conduct of young men and women. The ease with which a couple can secure absolute privacy when in possession of a car and

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the spirit of reckless abandon which high speed and moonlight drives engender have combined to break down the traditional barriers between the sexes. What is vulgarly known as "petting" is the rule rather than the exception in all classes of society. College and university students are not immune to these influences. The men, however, are much more likely to have become accustomed to "petting" than the women, since the better educated families still keep a watchful eye on their daughters and prevent as far as possible "joy riding." Probably it is also true that family precepts and admonitions carry more weight with the girls.

I am inclined to think that recent books on college life<sup>5</sup> exaggerate the amount of loose conduct among the students. "Petting" is common certainly, but actual immorality between university men and women is not. A considerable proportion of the men do have sexual relations occasionally, but usually with women unconnected with the university. Near-by large cities are often resorted to. As a matter of fact, it is not at all clear that there is more sexual laxity among college men than there was fifty years ago. The automobile has meant a far greater amount of "improper" conduct among them, but little, if any, more downright immorality. Because the women's standards were far stricter to

<sup>5</sup> Such as *Town and Gown* by L. and L. S. Montross and *The Plastic Age* by Percy Marks.

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begin with, the automobile has probably had more effect on their conduct than on that of the men. University women are willing to allow men liberties undreamed of by their mothers, though the great majority keep their standards of chastity. That some proportion of them do not is probably the result of the gradual breaking down of their inhibitions through long and continued intimacy with a particular man.

In addition to the automobile we must reckon as contributing causes of the change in standards of female conduct the highly sexed motion picture, the weakening of religious control, and contact with the looser moral code; but more deep-seated than any of these is that movement generally called the emancipation of women. Old restraints are off; the modern girl refuses to be chaperoned; she wishes to see life on equal terms with her brothers. Parents are almost helpless in the face of their daughter's determination to live their lives in their own way. The desire to be independent of protecting influences has made the very thought of restrictive conventions repulsive to many modern women. They regard their elders as old-fashioned and claim that the greater freedom as regards the relations between the sexes is preferable to the stricter code because based on principles of open-mindedness and self-control. A professor has risen to defend this point of view, on the ground that frank discussion



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is much less likely to result in immorality than parental suppression.<sup>6</sup>

To the thoughtful observer the improprieties of university men and women are not the most discouraging element in their common life; rather, it is the superficiality of their mutual interests, the lightness, the inconsequential nature of their conversation. Though students are much more frank than their fathers and mothers about matters of sex, and though they undoubtedly understand each other better, such understandings rarely ripen into fine intellectual comradeship. The whole American trend towards externalism and the satisfaction of the cruder emotions affects social relationships in a university. When a man and woman are in each other's company they seem to feel that seriousness is out of place, that the farther away from books, studies, and intellectual topics generally they can get, the better. Only a small share of the blame for this can be ascribed to the lack of a common culture, for even when men and women are taking the same courses, they discuss them seldom.

So marked is the shallowness of student conversation and so large is the proportion of time spent in this way that many believe the social life is now the principal attraction of a university, especially to women. Most careful observers, however, regard

<sup>6</sup> A Professor, "The Young Person," *Atlantic Monthly*, cxxxv (1923), p. 217.

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such a view as unduly pessimistic. Although the mingling with members of the opposite sex is deemed a delightful accompaniment of college life and is looked forward to by many, it is considered of primary importance by only a few women and by almost no men.

Present conditions of recreation among men and women carry with them other drawbacks. The expenditure of a great deal of money is required, on the part of the men in dance and movie tickets, taxicabs, and flowers; on the part of the women in clothes and hair dressing. Even more undesirable perhaps is the reputation which is given to institutions of higher education. The people of the country, hearing of the many parties, reading of occasional scandals, and discovering how much money their sons and daughters spend on pleasures of trivial importance, begin to distrust our universities and all that they represent. The latter come to be regarded as social clubs rather than institutions for the discovery and dissemination of truth.

Coeducation, though it temporarily aggravates these evils, does not lie at the root of them. There is, probably, as much time ill spent at men's colleges and nearly as much at women's. Coeducation simply complicates matters by bringing in another disturbing element. But the trouble really lies with the tone of our whole American life. If we, and especially our university students, were interested

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in more fundamental and vital things, all this triviality would vanish. Raise the whole level of student life to a truly intellectual plane and coeducation almost certainly becomes an asset. A fine mutual development would probably result. Even as it is, there are advantages. Men and women learn to live side by side on an equal, or nearly equal, footing. The situation of after life is prepared for, as it is not in men's and women's colleges. Moreover a certain eugenic value attaches to coeducation. Men and women of the better stocks are brought together, with the natural result that many marry. And, though their children are distressingly few, those they do rear have exceptionally congenial home environments. The fact that the proportion of marriages between college men and women which end in the divorce court is only one-eighth as great as the average is probably indicative of an unusually unified family life.

## CHAPTER VIII

### SELF-SUPPORT

**S**UPPORTING one's self partially or completely by working during the university year is a common practice among American undergraduates. In state universities about one-third of the men and women seek employment of one kind or another. This does not include a great number—nearly all of the remaining two-thirds—who work in the summer time, but not in the regular session, in order to help defray their expenses. Possibly the proportion of employed students is smaller in some endowed institutions,<sup>1</sup> but there is no reason to think that the differences are great enough to affect seriously the place of self-support in student thought. How many of the workers are entirely self-supporting is impossible to ascertain, but certainly a relatively small number pay all their expenses for the university year with money earned during that time.

As one might expect, a considerably larger

<sup>1</sup> The Chicago study, however, indicated that this was decidedly untrue for that institution. *Report of the Faculty-Student Committee on the Distribution of Students' Time* (Chicago, 1925), p. 21.

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proportion of the men than of the women work. Parents would be more willing to send a boy to a university to earn his way than a girl, not only because of the feeling that the female is the weaker sex but also because a college career is considered much less essential to a girl's happiness in life and therefore not to be undertaken in the face of hardships. Furthermore, women, much more often than men, stay out of college a year or so in order to earn enough to take them through. Not infrequently a girl teaches school alternate years in order to pay her way.

An elaborate examination of the kinds of lucrative employment obtained by students and of their methods of securing it would prove of little value. The truth is simply that a university career means so much to many young men and women that they are willing to work at almost anything. Some of the more common employments are waiting on table, washing dishes, tending furnaces, cutting grass, cleaning snow-covered walks, odd jobs of all sorts, playing in dance orchestras, and stenographic work. The usual wage is fifty cents an hour or its approximate equivalent in some form, as food or lodging. Students almost never work more than forty hours per week, and the average for those who are regularly employed is a little less than twenty. In order that employers may get in touch with students willing and able to perform the kind of work

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they have to offer, and vice versa, most universities have established employment bureaus. These, besides performing an economic function, serve to bring the townspeople into closer touch with the university administration. Their existence and the mention of them in university catalogues encourage many students in secondary schools to continue their education farther than they otherwise would.

It is not true, however, that all working students are battling for knowledge against adverse circumstances. Probably most of those who are entirely self-supporting might be so described, for they have little time for the frivolous side of student life and would not keep up the struggle unless they were seriously pursuing their education. Even among the remaining employed students there is probably more intellectual interest than among those not working, for the shallow, lazy, social-butterfly type is not to be found in their ranks. But there are a great many in the employed group whose enthusiasm for learning is very slight. Many, having in mind the prestige and social position which a college career affords, are willing to work to secure them. Some are attracted by the more or less fictitious glamour of college life as portrayed in magazine stories and newspaper articles. They are less concerned with higher education than with the joyful existence pictured. A few are primarily interested in extra-curricular activities. Athletes are frequently

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to be found helping to support themselves, largely in the hope that they will achieve fame in their chosen branch of sport. Nor must we omit mention of a large number who have money enough from home for the bare necessities of college existence but who work a little in order that they may enjoy more moving pictures, dances, and other forms of recreation.

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The relations between employed and unemployed students vary in different universities and at different times in the same university. At Michigan between the years 1917 and 1927 there has been to my knowledge little hard feeling between the two groups, and this situation seems to be typical of most American universities to-day. One reason for this amity is that the two classes are by no means distinct. There is a gradual shading off from those who do not work through those who work a little to those who support themselves entirely. Such a situation would make the formation of caste impossible were it not already rendered so by the democratic sentiment of America. The fact that employed students sometimes become athletic heroes universally honored among their fellows also tends to create a respectful attitude on the part of the rest. Furthermore, the university student has too much common sense to overrate wealth.

It has been said that there is little hard feeling;

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it does not follow that there is no thoughtless slighting or lack of cordiality on the part of the unemployed toward the employed students. There undoubtedly is. Accustomed as almost every one is to treating servants with a certain condescension, it would be a miracle if the student waiters and dishwashers in a fraternity house were made to feel that they were on an absolute parity with the fraternity members. To most minds the menial character of their work puts them in a somewhat separate sphere. Unemployed students if accused of a condescending attitude would hotly deny the charge, but the facts seem to indicate that, though they theoretically have the highest respect for those who are working, practically they do not always show it. Yet it is not at all infrequent to find pleasant friendships existing between boarders and waiters at an eating establishment. It is especially interesting to note that the employed students show little resentment at the superior attitude they sometimes encounter. They seem to appreciate the situation and to realize that the others really mean no personal disrespect. The students in my classes, when asked to describe the mutual reactions of the two groups, corroborated the views here expressed. One amusing observation was that university women "feel funny" about going out with a waiter or dishwasher but that otherwise no invidious distinction is made.



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There is no doubt that twelve hours work a week or more exerts a harmful influence on the scholarship of the worker. An investigation which I made on this point revealed that not only was the scholastic average of the employed students lower, but that inferiority was very nearly proportional to the number of hours a week worked.<sup>2</sup> The studies of those who worked less than two hours a day suffered not at all, the effect was considerable in the case of those working from two to three hours, and was quite marked when the working time exceeded this amount. In the professional schools the handicap is so great that it is recommended students stay out of college long enough to earn money to support themselves. Those who attempt law, medical, and dental courses while they are working find the strain a severe one, especially as there is almost no time left for recreation.

Students playing in dance orchestras form the only occupational group which shows a marked divergence from the scholastic average of the working group. My investigation indicated that their marks were far inferior. Among the chief reasons for this is that the study time of orchestra men is necessarily more broken up than that of the other employed groups. It is the general custom to prepare lessons in the evening, the very time when, two nights a week or more, these men are otherwise engaged.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix I, Table N.

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Practices must also be attended and these, too usually come in the evening. Also, orchestra men often make more money than is good for them, particularly if they are not entirely self-supporting. An income of from seventy-five to one hundred and twenty-five dollars a month from this source leads perhaps in the majority of cases, to an excess of pleasure seeking which in turn distracts them from academic work. Orchestra men frequently buy secondhand automobiles; they are likely to acquire the habits of drinking and gambling; and they almost always are of the sort who spend not a little time entertaining members of the opposite sex. In producing these results, the nervousness and strain which accompany orchestra work share the responsibility with the men's income. There can be little doubt that playing modern dance music so continuously causes jaded nerves. The men are tired and yet keyed up, a combination which commonly brings with it a thirst for excitement. They want to be "on the go" every minute. One player has told me that the work produces a chronic restlessness, making it difficult to concentrate on anything for more than a few minutes and ever causing wakefulness at night.

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The necessity of seeking employment affects the life of a student at almost every point. Very few

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of those who contribute at all largely to their own support become members of house groups because they feel they cannot afford to do so. Nor do they have the average opportunity for recreation. This is not a drawback in the case of gambling, drinking, and other unprofitable kinds of pleasure. But, on the other hand, they lose the opportunities which the rest enjoy for participating in outdoor sports. Indeed, so confining is the life of those working three or more hours a day that their health is often seriously impaired. Those who work have not, as a rule, much time for extra-curricular activities either. Whatever time they have on their hands they generally prefer to spend in recreation. A notable exception to this general rule is the athlete of little means who is encouraged to come to the university in order that he may play on intercollegiate teams. If he is not helped by interested alumni—as is sometimes the case—he must find employment. It is very rare that a student who comes to a university under these conditions attains more than a passing grade.

Perhaps the most important consideration of all is the effect of self-support on character. If the individual is of a serious turn of mind and is really anxious to make the most of his college career, working may prove of great value. It compels one to apportion one's time, energy, and pecuniary resources carefully and systematically. The habits

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of industry and thrift thus acquired prove serviceable always. Moreover, employment tends to keep one away from those least desirable forms of pleasure which are likely to sap one's enthusiasm for learning. A greater appreciation of an education's value comes with having to work for it. In short, the employed student who is conscientious develops a stable, consistent personality, capable of self-control. If, on the other hand, the individual is not deeply interested in the true purpose of the university, he is likely, because of the number of attractive pastimes available outside the working hours, to become unusually superficial. His life is a hasty, nervous one at best and if not ordered by an intelligent seriousness is certain to produce slipshod scholarship and foster unreflectiveness in every sphere of conduct.

Although generally little resentment is felt by employed students toward those who do not have to work, realization of their position sometimes affects character harmfully. Some, becoming accustomed to doing menial labor, are simply timid about asserting themselves among their fellow students. Their development is hampered by their inability to shake off the feeling of inferiority. But in rare cases the consciousness of a harder lot takes a morbid turn, and working students begin to pity themselves. The resulting sense of martyrdom is of course a baneful influence on character, leading, as it does, to the

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paralyzing traits of lack of initiative, pessimism, and self-distrust.

Undergraduates with a serious desire for an education should probably not work more than two or two and one-half hours a day if it can be avoided. Longer hours of employment make impossible that rounded existence which favors the highest development of the individual. A university student should not feel constantly driven but should have leisure for reading and reflection.

## CHAPTER IX

### RELIGION

**P**ERHAPS the best approach to the question of the religion of students is through a consideration of the existing relationships between them and religious institutions. Since these relationships are the most clear-cut features of the landscape we are trying to picture, it seems wise to secure as accurate as possible a representation of them at the start; then we can hope to sketch in the hazier portions of the scene without deviating materially from the truth. Accuracy of detail cannot be expected, however, for religious beliefs and feelings, always difficult to get at, appear doubly unapproachable in the confused complexity of university life.

I suppose that the principal religious institutions are scriptures, creeds, prayer, religious precepts regarding conduct, and church worship. It will perhaps be worth our while to discuss the attitude and practice of undergraduates in regard to each of these. It must be borne in mind that what I shall say throughout this chapter is based, for the most part, not on any elaborate statistical study, but on ten years of personal observation, supple-

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mented by discussions with university men possessing insight into the minds of their fellows.

The number of students who are familiar, in the sense that our grandfathers were, with the Bible is very small. A recent investigation conducted by students indicated that there are a few, about 5 per cent, of a typical student body who, brought up in families which have in some way kept the religious atmosphere of a century ago, draw strength and joy from frequent readings of the sacred text and reflection upon it.<sup>1</sup> But in the main such individuals are apart from their fellows; they are regarded as "queer." And indeed they are a quite remarkable group, for influences which have shaped the lives of most of their contemporaries seem to have been either completely avoided or rendered impotent in their cases. The great majority of Christian students remember the outline of the Bible story of creation; they have a faint recollection of a few Old Testament stories, or at least they recognize names like Jonah, Samson, Goliath, and Daniel; they can repeat six or seven of the Ten Commandments; they have a general idea of the teachings of Christ, though little accurate knowledge concerning His life; and they can recall the names of a few disciples and St. Paul. Beyond this all is a haze. The Bible to these students is not

<sup>1</sup> Neil Staebler and John Diekhoff, "Religion at Michigan," *Michigan Chimes*. vi. March, 1925, p. 29.

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a vital thing at all, but a book, once of great influence and importance, now to be looked at only occasionally more from curiosity than from a desire for spiritual aid. Indeed, there is little thought of turning to the Bible for comfort and guidance in times of sorrow or perplexity. Even those who are led to appreciate the literary merits of the Bible through university courses rarely develop that love for it which our forefathers had. As James Bissett Pratt has well pointed out, the power which the Bible has had over men has been largely due to the fact that its passages were learned in childhood as sacred words.<sup>2</sup> Those who read it seriously and connectedly for the first time in college can hardly be expected to fall much under its influence.

My observation convinces me that belief in an institutionalized creed is just as unusual among undergraduates as familiarity with the Bible. Professor Pratt has put it very neatly as follows: "Their grandfathers believed the Creed; their fathers a little doubted the Creed; they have never read it."<sup>3</sup> Though some have personal convictions concerning the nature of the universe and their relation to the known and the unknown, our young people have little interest in objective formulations. Most can

<sup>2</sup> "Religion and the Young Generation," *Yale Review*, xii (1923), p. 602. This excellent article is by far the most penetrating treatment of the subject I have found. Much of what the present chapter contains has come from reflection upon Professor Pratt's remarks.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 594.



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hardly be said to have a steadying faith. Perhaps a third possess a point of view with respect to man's place in the scheme of things precise enough to give them a stable outlook in accordance with which they can shape their lives consistently. A few more have attempted to find a faith which they could wholeheartedly accept and have failed. But the majority have simply not bothered as yet to orient themselves. They find that they can get along satisfactorily without giving much thought to the ultimate realities of life. When they are confronted with the problems and hardships of later life which, to be successfully met, almost require a definite faith, then, think these students, will be time enough to worry about the matter.

Intimate conversations with students seem to suggest that prayer, though rare indeed, is more common than either regular reading of the Scriptures or adherence to an institutional creed. This would seem natural, since prayer does not imply the acceptance of so much as do the others. It is a simple, direct relation between the individual and the Deity. Now, though many students are not certain that there is a Supreme Being, most of them incline towards that view. And a third of them, perhaps, are sufficiently desirous of keeping in touch with Him to take the easiest of all methods of doing so, prayer. I do not mean that these men and women pray frequently, at great length, or very fervently.

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Probably not more than once a week they lay bare their minds in a calm, unemotional, and rather fragmentary way. Nor must we deceive ourselves into believing that all those who pray have a sincere desire to commune with God. Quite a number will frankly admit, if you get close enough to them, that they are, to put it baldly, simply "playing safe." They believe that prayer cannot possibly do them any harm and that it may do them some good. Even these individuals, however, are probably benefited unconsciously by discovering to themselves their aspirations and desires and acknowledging their faults.

The number of students who follow religious precepts like the Ten Commandments as a means of expressing their religious impulses is small. There is little sense of working together with God in order to fulfill His purposes. If university men and women abide by a moral code which is similar to that laid down by religious leaders, in most cases it is only because the code appeals to them as worthy on general grounds, not because of prestige due to its religious backing. Young people, for instance, will dance or not dance according as they think the experiences of life suggest that dancing is good or bad. The fact that it is allowed or forbidden by their churches has almost no influence, except for a very small group. This, of course, marks a distinct divergence from the situation pre-

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vailing a century or two ago when religious traditions possessed almost absolute authority in their own right and when people felt a sense of joy in carrying out what they believed to be God's will in matters of conduct.

Church worship, though much more common than belief in a definite creed, the following of religious precepts for their own sake, or frequent reading of the Scriptures, is still far less common than it was fifty or even twenty-five years ago. At Michigan, by actual count, between 20 and 25 per cent of the students go to church on an average Sunday. About half of these are probably regular attendants; the rest, very occasional ones. Most of the habitual churchgoers attend service because they draw from it inspiration, comfort, and joy. Their attitude is not one of acceptance of unscientific dogma, but rather of whole-hearted participation in an institution which they believe to have value both for themselves and for society at large. It is from this group, for the most part, that the active workers in Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations and in the field of social welfare come. Some of the regular attendants go to church more or less mechanically from force of habit; but the influences of the university environment tend to keep their numbers at a minimum. The general drift is away from church attendance so that those who find no real satisfaction for their

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spiritual natures in public worship soon drop the practice.

The men and women who go to church occasionally do so, I am led to believe, for two reasons. Either they mean in a sort of half-hearted way to attend regularly and are distracted by one thing or another, or they stay away until they feel pangs of conscience because of their non-attendance. Students in the latter situation have no vital interest in church worship but feel vaguely that they ought to go. They cannot bring themselves to break completely with the religious habits of their earlier life.

Such is the situation, as nearly as I can ascertain it, with respect to religious institutions in a student body fairly typical of our large, non-sectarian universities. To put it mildly these students lack interest in the forms in which religion has been cloaked for centuries. Since those who possess a definite creed, read the Bible for moral guidance, and otherwise follow in the religious footsteps of their ancestors are impelled by beliefs and feelings of immemorial standing, no more will be said about them. They are simply living in the ancient traditions. It is that majority of students who do not do these things whose case demands examination. They are the ones of whom it has been well said: "If you ask them whether they are orthodox or heterodox, they may hardly know what you mean,

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and they certainly will wonder that you should care.”<sup>4</sup> How have these men and women come to lose interest in religious institutions?

\* \* \*

At the outset it is quite clear that the causes of the present condition are not to be found entirely, or indeed largely, in the university environment. Habits built up in childhood have a strange tenacity. Were our students reared under the same religious influences as their grandfathers they might fall away from religious institutions slightly in college, but they certainly would not show the indifference towards them which at present exists. Nor can we place the blame on the parents, the Sunday school teachers, or the public schools. We must go deeper, to the fundamental tendencies and conditions of our age and nation. Nothing short of basic changes could account for a religious situation so different from that of the past.

The most fundamental cause, I think, is the growth of the scientific or critical point of view. As soon as the doctrine of evolution on the one hand and historical and archæological evidence on the other began to undermine the infallibility of the Bible taken literally, many men gradually came to adopt the attitude that nothing should be accepted

<sup>4</sup> Pratt, "Religion and the Young Generation," *Yale Review*, xii (1923), p. 595.

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on authority, but all be tested and proved. The opponents of this new doctrine laid much stress on the necessity of accepting the Bible *in toto* and literally if one were to be religious. And thereby they did their own cause great harm, for many of the skeptical were led to say to themselves, "If this sort of dogmatism be the result of using religious forms, let us have none of them." The consequence has been that a sort of distrust of the symbols of religion has grown up. It has been felt that religious institutions were trying to bind the hands of science and impede progress toward universal enlightenment. Quite naturally a great number have come to believe that they can arrive at a better religious adjustment through their own unaided efforts than through the mediation of institutions.

The other great force working against the adherence to religious institutions is the speedy and external character of American life. There are so many new and engaging subjects for thought, so many attractive outlets for energy that religion has been relegated to a subordinate place. Even those people who hold a firm belief in existing religious institutions do not find the time for attendance at prayer meetings or for household prayers. Facile communication has brought the whole world to our door with the natural result that we have given up many of the less attractive activities. The newspaper with its great store of

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interesting, often sensational, items has won the day against the Bible, just as the moving picture has displaced the prayer meeting. Only an intense concern with the vital things of life could maintain religious interest in the face of such distractions and this, Americans, absorbed in money making and other material affairs, do not possess.

These two influences, one in the stream of thought, one in the stream of external activities, have far from done away with religious institutions, however. The majority of university students are church members. The parents of some of them are extremely zealous in church work, frequently resort to the Bible, and are otherwise carrying on the tradition of their fathers and mothers. But a much larger number of students' parents have lost the former enthusiastic devotion to religious forms. Though they commonly continue to attend church and to send their children to Sunday school, their hearts are not fervently in it. They are easily persuaded to go picnicking on pleasant days or to stay at home when it rains. However, the idea of a complete break from the connections of their childhood makes them uncomfortable and they believe in a vague way that it is best that their children too come under the steadying influence of religious institutions. But their convictions are not strong in the matter and the children know it. Young people, perennially

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distrustful of established forms, have quickly perceived the doubt in the minds of their elders. They early become aware that there is a conflict in progress between certain scientists and certain ecclesiastics and, not having a strong religious tradition behind them, they suspect dogmatic religion of being far less perfect than it claims to be. Knowing that the church is being assailed and feeling that the assailants may be right, they are likely to regard attendance as at best a perfunctory form, at worst a necessary bore, something to be evaded whenever possible and to be dispensed with altogether as soon as they are out from under the authority of the parental wing.

Church attendance falls away quite sharply after the students come to college. A study recently undertaken indicates that more than a third of the students go to church less often than before their entrance into the university, as compared with barely one-twentieth who go more frequently.<sup>5</sup> One reason for this is that whatever restraints the freshmen have been laboring under at home are relaxed. Though habit keeps a few faithful to religious institutions despite a real lack of interest, the student is usually so conscious of his new-found independence that he does nothing which he does not want to do. Those who have long since lost interest in

<sup>5</sup> Staebler and Diekhoff, *Michigan Chimes*, vi, February, 1925, p. 20.



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the formal side of religion immediately leave the fold. And it is quite natural that many others should revel somewhat in the absence of control. The tendency is to perform no acts which one has been compelled to perform in the past, whether they be good or bad in themselves. It is probably true that this spirit of revolt only remains a contributing cause to the student lack of interest through the freshman and sophomore years, for rebellion soon ceases when there is no active control to rebel against.

Of more influence perhaps are the various other interests in university life which make demands on the student's time. On week days any formal observance of religion other than an occasional short prayer is not even thought of, and on Sunday there are many other things to do. Lessons must be prepared, and students often leave longer tasks like theses to be attended to over the week-end. Or, if study is not pressing, the prospect of lounging in a bath robe on Sunday morning, reading section upon section of the metropolitan papers and listening to the phonograph is often too alluring to be resisted. Those prominent in extra-curricular activities commonly welcome the opportunity for sleep or rest, and these admired individuals unconsciously set a fashion of Sunday morning loafing for the rest of the student body.

Though university teaching need not weaken the

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hold of religious institutions, it usually does have that effect. Courses in biology are likely to destroy, temporarily at least, faith in a great many things beside the literal truth of the Bible story of creation, for they frequently upset the individual's whole conception of life. But more fundamental than this, the stimulus to original thinking which is felt in a university is apt to play havoc with traditional religious ideas. The questioning attitude, though not as well developed as the teachers would like, is nevertheless adopted to some extent, and one of the first things to undergo its critical inspection is religion. Since many of the religious observances of their fathers seem to them empty and unnecessary in modern life, they frequently repudiate them.

The consciousness of being members of a select group also breeds indifference to religious institutions. One can often hear it said on a university campus that churches are suitable and necessary for the ignorant, but that they have nothing to offer the well educated person. The latter, it is thought, can find his place in the cosmos satisfactorily without the aid of any institution. On the basis of this point of view it has become more or less a fad among many groups of students to ignore the church, the Bible, and everything else connected with the traditional religious standpoint.

Were not students endowed with the confidence

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and optimism of youth and had not most of them been reared in comfortable circumstances, it is doubtful whether they would feel so capable of taking care of themselves without the aid of formal religion. Few have had to undergo any severe hardships or meet serious crises and fewer still are looking forward to troublesome times in the future. Accordingly they have seldom felt, and do not now feel, the need of that comfort and sustenance which an abiding faith supported by a common worship can give.

The churches in our college towns are, to a small extent, responsible for the student attitude toward institutional religion. Many university men and women do not care for the services; but that is more often because they themselves are indifferent to religious issues and problems than because the churches are deficient. "If the minister preaches down to them, they are quick to discover the fact and despise him for it. If he discusses politics, they think he had best stick to his last. If he expounds theology, they hurriedly close their ears. And if he speaks of the inner things of the spirit, they fail to understand the terms he uses." <sup>6</sup> Nevertheless I do not think we can acquit the churches of all responsibility. Some preachers undoubtedly insult the intelligence of student audiences, dwelling at length

<sup>6</sup> Pratt, "Religion and the Young Generation," *Yale Review*, xii (1923), p. 595.

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upon obvious truths. Others appear lacking in breadth and personal charm, so that they do not greatly impress or inspire their congregations. A few students, just how large a proportion it would be difficult to say, are not sympathetic with the way in which the churches are putting religion into practice. Some of these are repelled by the present tendency to compromise with the spirit of the times and attract people by moving pictures, instrumental music, and short, snappy sermons; while others have the more fundamental objection that the churches are not striving actively enough toward the betterment of social conditions, that they are content to preach the charitable life but are not willing to lead in the bringing about of reforms and the overthrowing of privilege. Even supposing, however, that all these objections to the church were remedied, I doubt whether attendance figures of our university undergraduates would be greatly swelled.

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What shall we say of that majority of students who appear uninterested in existing religious institutions? Are they simply irreligious, or do they arrive at a life synthesis unaided? There is only one very small group concerning which definite answers to these questions can be returned. There are on every university campus a certain few who embrace some doctrine such as socialism with a reli-

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gious zeal. To these individuals the churches are relics of a mild and ineffectual religion in an age which needs strenuous social reorganization. They have thought seriously about their relation to life as a whole, have reached definite conclusions, and are attempting to act upon them. Such, however, is not the case with that majority who are allied with no religious cause. Not only is there no outward mark of their sentiment, but they seem averse to letting one catch a glimpse of their inner selves. The externalism of American life is a potent influence away from introspection and self-analysis; and even those who are well aware of their own religion infrequently discuss it, largely for the reason that they feel incompetent to express themselves on this topic. Moreover, the idea of religious toleration has been so whole-heartedly accepted that many refrain from voicing their views lest they appear to be trying to convert others. In the face of such barriers to understanding it is patent that no one can speak authoritatively on the religion of such men and women.

Perhaps the nearest approach to an adequate statement of the religion of the average student who does not utilize religious forms is to say that he has an embryonic religion but that he is largely unaware of it. Most university men and women believe in living a good life for, as they will say, its own sake. If asked to go deeper and examine more clearly the

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synthesis of which this is an expression, they cannot do it. They have no well defined notion beyond this, nor do they see the need of any. They know not how, but they have arrived at an attitude toward life which expresses itself in action rather than in belief or feeling. The future life enters almost not at all into their calculations. In its essence their religion consists in the belief, unconsciously held, that if they live honest, industrious, and serviceable lives they will be in tune with the universe. They do not wish to be preached to but desire to be allowed to apply their common sense code in their own way. Such individuals frequently say they have no religion simply because they do not realize that they are constantly acting upon some sort of unitary conception of life.

Since the student is often unaware of the synthesis, it is evident that the process by which he has arrived at it must also have been unconscious. Even in childhood institutional religion has had no great hold on most undergraduates. When they come to college they naturally drift away from the church, forsaking any remnants of an authoritative synthesis they may have acquired. Finding themselves living satisfactorily without giving much thought to religion, they continue to be guided by the general point of view which the democratic ideal of service engenders. Since existence is not for them a perplexing problem and since there are no

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clouds as yet on the distant horizon, no more conscious orientation appears necessary.<sup>7</sup>

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The student attitude toward Y. M. C. A. work throws an interesting sidelight on the religion of university men. The activities of organizations of this sort are almost invariably undertaken by those few students who have thought through their own religion and who are seeking an expression for it in practical service. Many of the others, in so far as they have any definite belief in the matter, believe that one's religion should be expressed in everyday life and distrust a little an institution which tends to separate and stress religious or altruistic action as something distinct from and superior to the common run of experience. They think it is rather presumptuous for individuals to hold themselves up as especially worthy of approbation because they make the doing of good to others a conscious and intentional thing rather than living the good life without making a virtue of it. Not that the Y. M. C. A. means to adopt a "holier than thou" attitude, but outsiders attribute such a feeling to its workers because they appear to take such satisfaction in their activities. Those who obviously devote their lives to others seem to be regarded as shining examples

<sup>7</sup> Those interested will find "Religious Attitudes of College Students," by Read Bain, *American Journal of Sociology*, xxxii (1926-7), p. 762, illuminating.

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by the Association and all connected with it. It is this which provokes the ordinary student who believes in living according to his lights and performing good works where and when he sees fit. He does not criticize the tasks which the Y. M. C. A. sets itself, but he thinks that the organization emphasizes their importance far out of proportion to their value. In his opinion it is doubtless proper for a few students to take an active interest in these things but he sees no reason why all should be expected to do so or why those should be thought a little less worthy who do not. He regards the Y. M. C. A. as an organization which has a narrow, stereotyped formula for goodness and does not feel it incumbent upon him to support it. This vague hostility is often increased by the dislike which most people have for anyone who starts out, however sympathetically, to improve his fellows. There is also a subtle feeling that a person who is meek, gentle, and unusually religious is in some sense effeminate and unfit to cope with the problems of full-blooded men. The average student if he wishes to get in touch with a religious institution, therefore commonly keeps away from an organization of, to him, self-conscious doers of good. It is only fair to add that the women generally look with more favor on the Y. W. C. A., probably because service has been felt in our civilization to be a peculiarly feminine function.



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Supposing the point of view of students who are indifferent to religious institutions has been set forth with some correctness, what shall we say concerning the value of their religious life? Have they all the religion that they need? However comfortable an individual may feel, I do not think we are justified in giving him a clean bill of spiritual health if he has not given more serious attention to the fundamental problems of human existence than has the average college student. If we can call these young people religious at all, theirs is a very shallow religion. Their synthesis is largely unconscious and subject to all the irrationality of things not worked through by strenuous reasoning. They get along satisfactorily because they have hit upon a religious adjustment suited to the superficiality of their lives. If, however, they should suddenly come face to face with serious problems or hardships they would probably find their religion inadequate. They are living from hand to mouth as it were and saving nothing for a rainy day. Their present confidence in themselves is likely to receive a shock as the trials of later life come upon them. Some of them will be able to make the religious adjustment themselves, but possibly most of them will return to the church for succor. There is a comfort in a common worship, a consolation and a hope in a common faith, and a happiness in the thought that one is living under a common moral code, sanctioned by a Divine

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Being, which can scarcely be had apart from religious institutions. After all, the ordinary individual needs the benefit of stored-up thought in religion as in other phases of life. The problem is too great for most of us to solve unaided. Nor is it improbable that many will become increasingly aware of the church's value to society and its need for support from all worthy men.

The religious situation among university students is a perfectly natural outcome of the forces working in American life and should therefore cause no particular alarm. The disorganization from the institutional point of view which is now apparent is but part of the universal mental and material confusion incident to an age of transition. In so far as our young men and women are breaking from religious institutions in a vague hope of finding a freer conception of life than that for which formal religion has stood, they are laying the foundation of a better future. In so far as they are careless, they are simply examples of the externalism and superficiality of twentieth-century America.

## CHAPTER X

### MORALE

**I** TAKE it that a group is said to possess good morale when all its members are actively engaged in furthering its common aims and ideals, each individual performing his particular function enthusiastically and with due regard for the interests of the whole. The example which comes to mind is that of a nation at war, with all its forces and resources organized to one end, and patriotism calling forth unsuspected energies in the people. When looked at negatively morale involves the repression or inhibition of all impulses out of harmony with the group's ideals. Large expenditures on luxuries would thus be destructive of the national morale in time of war.

From the individual point of view morale implies moral synthesis of a high order—the proper organization in the mind of the conflicting impulses and activities arising from group life. In so far as institutional relations are involved, this requires a healthy discipline of the individual. A church, a school, or a labor union must give direction and form to the efforts of its members; the latter must

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contribute their initiative and enthusiasm. There must be neither too much nor too little mechanism in the institution, neither formalism nor disorganization; but rather that freedom under law which gives all the chance for self-expression in the common cause. The standards or rules, since they appeal to the reason of the men and women following them, are not felt as restrictive. The system of control simply represents the self-control of the individuals harmonized and integrated. Yet this does not necessarily mean a democratic system. People can, as in the case of Germany under the Hohenzollerns, feel that domination is desirable; the idea of external control may be cherished and become a part of the very self.

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The finest examples of morale in undergraduate life are to be found in activities quite remote from the principal purpose of the university. Intercollegiate athletic teams, the staffs of student publications, debating teams, bands, and similar groups are likely to be characterized by unusually devoted service on the part of the members to the interests of the whole. In these cases the aim of the organization is quite clear, so that the enthusiasm of the individual finds something definite to which to attach itself. As we all know, patriotism reaches its greatest heights at times of international dispute or international comparison of some sort because then

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the people have a well defined cause which is synonymous with their country's welfare. Moreover the feeling of moral unity is more easily developed in these functional student groups because they are small. Face-to-face coöperation in a congenial enterprise can hardly fail to produce good morale. Finally, the enterprises in question, with the exception of some intercollegiate athletic teams, are democratically controlled. Though, as I have said, this is not essential to the attainment of a fine morale, it makes it much easier in America where the democratic sentiment is so strong. Our young people are seldom enthusiastic concerning projects in the control of which they do not actively share. Indeed, what, from the student standpoint, seems to be unjustifiable faculty meddling frequently has damaging results to the morale of these organizations. At a certain university a few years ago many of the staff members of one of the student publications resigned because the faculty board of control insisted on upholding a standard of decency in journalism as opposed to the doctrine of complete freedom of expression.

Morale is, of course, less pronounced in groups where any one of the above conditions—definiteness of purpose, face-to-face relations, or democratic control—is lacking. Fraternities and sororities, for instance, are usually inferior in this respect to the functional groups cited, because their aim is rather

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vague. There is seldom a specific end toward the fulfillment of which all must constantly bend their coöperating energies. During "rushing" there is the common purpose of securing the best freshmen in competition with the other house groups; during an intra-mural athletic tournament there is the unifying influence of the desire to win. But there is nothing permanent except a somewhat nebulous striving to keep the reputation of the organization good and to increase its glory. Yet morale is by no means absent from these groups. As has been related, men sometimes try out for extra-curricular activities in order to reflect honor upon their fraternity, rather than from any interest in the activity or desire for personal glory. This morale must be attributed to the intimacy of association and the democratic spirit prevailing in these groups.

A lack of intimacy detracts from the morale of quite a number of student organizations. Literary societies which meet perhaps but once a fortnight, many dramatic clubs, church societies, and the like are apt to have group aims and to be controlled by the participants, but the members are not together enough to secure that sense of loyalty to each other which is necessary to good morale. Honorary societies are still more deficient in this respect, the scholarly ones because they meet very infrequently, the campus ones because, in addition to a relative lack of intimacy, there is little or no common purpose.

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The class, once such a closely knit group in our institutions of higher education and still that in our smaller colleges, is ceasing to be of importance in our universities. The immense increase in the number of students has naturally caused a decline in class loyalty. When a man knew all his classmates well, allegiance to his class was not infrequently equal to that to his fraternity. But now that a student in our larger colleges of liberal arts can hardly know one-fifth of his classmates by sight and the group as a whole is seldom brought together, class morale has almost disappeared. The freshmen frequently have the greatest sense of unity. The restrictions placed upon them by tradition, the distinguishing insignia which they are commonly required to wear, and the generally domineering attitude of the upper-classmen tend to remind them constantly of their membership in the lowest class. Whether this constraint on the freshmen really operates to produce the best type of morale, or whether it produces a morale characterized by cramping uniformity is difficult to determine. There is no doubt that recent high school graduates are likely to be inordinately self-confident and to have an exaggerated idea of their own importance, traits obviously hostile to the development of good morale, and traits which are quite easily eliminated by the process of freshman subordination. On the other hand, this treatment tends to cast all in the same

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mold, to encourage blind conformity, to stamp out salient individuality.

The freshmen are further cemented by the "under-class games" between freshmen and sophomores which are held in many universities. These bring the first-year men together in a group and fire them with a common enthusiasm. Their "we" feeling is also stimulated by the fact that the great majority of the students in their classrooms are in their first year also. This homogeneity is not present in the later years.

Indeed, most of the stimulants to morale operating upon freshmen are missing thereafter. The "under-class games" remain during the sophomore year and usually the only additional tie is the formation of new friendships. The juniors are often brought together somewhat more by class "proms," "hops," or plays, but even so loyalty is frequently but vaguely felt. But the senior year sees a strengthening of morale again. The members of the class gather as a body at the various functions preliminary to graduation and thus achieve a greater feeling of solidarity. Moreover, the realization that they are all facing the same fate—separation from old ties and the commencement of a more rigorous régime—acts upon them as would a common purpose to make them sensible of their mutual dependence. Like passengers on a sinking liner, they stand together to await their doom.



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For much the same reason that class morale has declined, university morale is somewhat waning. In the last century when the students were few enough to form a compact and unified group, loyalty to the institution was natural. But as the number of students grew, the ties binding the individual to the whole were weakened by lack of acquaintance. To-day a general social view discloses loosely connected, almost discrete organizations, each with its own interests, rather than a closely knit group. However, the love and respect for Alma Mater, developed when our universities were smaller, have survived in a tradition of not a little strength. Devotion to the university has been set up as one of the finest of ideals; it is enlarged upon by faculty, students, and alumni at all public gatherings; the conforming student body has seized upon it as the *sine qua non* of the true university man or woman, thus insuring its profession at least by all entering freshmen. But by far the greatest force which keeps "college spirit" alive is the interest in intercollegiate athletic contests. With regard to these, students have an intense sense of oneness and all strive to do their share in producing victory. University morale is thus much like community spirit. The average citizen only identifies himself with his home town when the latter is brought into conflict or comparison of some sort with other communities. Then the lack of acquaintance among the residents is made up for by

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the vivid consciousness of a common interest. It is true, however, that the sense of unity may be stimulated by events not involving outside opposition. Threats to the traditions of the institution from within such as the refusal of a freshman to wear his distinctive cap will usually give rise to a strong "we" feeling. In rare instances the desire for some projected building or other improvement is sufficiently great to strengthen morale. Thus there is undoubtedly a very general spirit of service to the university which is a character-building force. But that it has much influence toward increasing the sense of brotherhood among students is not so clear. Like many descendants of illustrious ancestors they are proud of their origin but not always loyal to each other.

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It must seem curious to those unacquainted with American undergraduate life that there is almost no sense of unity based upon the principal purposes of the institution—learning and scholarship. The students seem to feel scarcely at all that they are members of a coöperative whole, working for the enlightenment of society, and vying with other similar bodies in the carrying out of the common purpose. What little of this spirit there is does not seem to arise from the daily university work, but seems to be more or less artificially stimulated by convocations and other events which bring the undergraduates together in an intellectual atmosphere.

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The absence of scholarly morale indicates a fundamental maladjustment between the institution of higher education and its members. A great many undergraduates have not the true purposes of a university at heart; they are in the institution but not of it. Their lack of deep intellectual interest as entering freshmen precludes the possibility of their immediately becoming serviceable units in the organization, and the university itself seems, in most instances, unable to supply the original deficiency. An institution with which students are in but half-hearted sympathy quite naturally finds difficulty in arousing allegiance to a point of view so foreign to the minds of contemporary Americans as that embodied in the scholarly ideal. Hence we have a great body of students united, in so far as they are united at all, not by the central purpose of the university but rather by by-products like athletics.

The universities are not absolved from responsibility because the task of arousing scholarly morale is a difficult one. The professors have been culpable in that they have paid but little attention to this essential matter. They have felt that morale was something for the administrative officers to look after and have therefore given little thought to inspiring students with a love of learning. Even the administrative officers have not recognized as soon as they should have the lack of intellectual interest among those coming to institutions of higher educa-

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tion; and, recognizing it, they have not taken appropriate action. The result has been a situation in which the student feels he is simply subjecting himself to a mechanical process much as a piece of metal is put through a milling machine.

Though it is undoubtedly true that the universities themselves have not done all that they could to stimulate scholarly morale, it cannot be said that faculty rules have been repressive of it. Those to whom academic regulations seem unreasonable are usually those who have not caught the true spirit of the institution at all. Such men and women feel that rules which penalize the individual for poor scholarship, those which have to do with eligibility for extra-curricular activities, and the rest make the educational process unduly formal. For them, this is true because they lack intellectual curiosity and have not yet attained the faintest conception of what a university should be. But for those who have an abiding interest in things of the mind, most of these requirements seem reasonable and an embodiment of their own notions in relation to higher education. They regard them as aids to self-expression in the coöperative enterprise of learning rather than as restraints. I do not wish to be understood as thinking that no fault can be found with the present regulations; my opinion is simply that these measures have worthy purposes in view and are on the whole well calculated to achieve them, the chief

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blame for their incomplete success lying with the students rather than with the measures themselves.

Many students believe that if they had a more active share in the control of the academic system scholarly morale would be strengthened. This would certainly be true if only those with vital intellectual interest participated in the directing activities. But it would obviously be ill advised to allow that great mass of men and women more or less unsympathetic with the central purposes of the university to share in the control. It would be like permitting the faculty to vote for the football captain. Perhaps for the present the best that can be done is for the faculty to take into consideration the opinion of the better students so that there will be participation by them in spirit if not in form.

One phase of the anomalous situation of a university without scholarly morale is the lack of effective student leadership in this field. Since the greater proportion of the students have no truly vital concern with the search after knowledge, they do not throw themselves open to the influence of the few outstanding scholars. Rather they take as their leaders men proficient in athletics and campus activities. Though fine students frequently have the traits essential to leadership they seldom attract many followers because of the unfavorable milieu. And there is the further consideration that men and women of ability are now led to put most of their

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energy into extra-curricular activities for the sake of prestige, who would become fine students if scholarship were held in equal esteem.

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The criticism is not infrequently made of our universities that they are autocratically controlled by capitalists out of sympathy with educational ideals;<sup>1</sup> that the faculties are hampered in building up scholarly morale among the students because of the commercialism and class bias of the members of the governing boards. Certainly most of the trustees or regents do belong to the capitalist classes, as the term is generally understood. Manufacturers, merchants, business men of all kinds, lawyers, and others with connections largely in this group far outnumber the artisans, professors, and other non-capitalists. Yet this is simply what one would expect in a capitalistically organized industrial society like ours. The prominent man is the only one that can be elected to a governing board of a university. He must be an individual of recognized standing in the community, one—as long as these positions are unpaid—with enough wealth and leisure to give part of his time to a consideration of university affairs, and one deeply enough interested in higher education to desire the position. Who

<sup>1</sup> The fullest exposition of this thesis is to be found in Upton Sinclair's *The Goose Step* (Pasadena, 1923).

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but capitalists can meet these requirements? The fact that they are practically all of this class may not be the most desirable thing, but it is of little use to hope for anything else as long as our universities are publicly or quasi-publicly controlled in an age of commercialism. As a matter of fact, I am led to believe by careful inquiries that a majority of the members of governing boards are sane, intelligent, conscientious, if a little cautious, men. They are not attempting to control the universities in their own interests, but in what they conceive to be the interests of the general public. Some of them, it must be admitted, are narrow-minded and do not perceive that what they believe best for the people is nothing more than a rationalization of their own selfish interest. But I believe that most are of better stuff. Even supposing that half of the regents and trustees of our large universities are narrow-minded to the point of frowning upon any discussion of radical doctrines in undergraduate courses—a supposition which I do not believe justified—I doubt whether there would be any interference with the freedom of teaching except in most extraordinary cases. Governing boards are concerned chiefly with financial administration and usually leave matters of educational policy to the judgment of the president and deans. Furthermore, as long as the teacher's radicalism is confined to classroom utterances, regents and trustees are likely to regard him as harm-

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less, for they believe the undergraduates will soon forget his views. It is only when an instructor begins to attract public notice by setting forth his opinions in a propagandist fashion by means of books and public lectures that the boards are likely to take action. Then they feel that it is their duty to protect the good name of the university and to promote social solidarity by preventing—to them—unfortunate conflicts and dissensions. It is interesting to note, however, that a teacher never incurs their wrath by giving out propaganda supporting the conservative side of issues. It is difficult to tell whether non-capitalists would be narrow-minded in their own way or not, but it seems likely.

There is, in addition to this infrequently exercised direct control, a subtle, indirect, almost unconscious one. The faculty administrative authorities wish to stand well with the governing board and so are careful to have in their departments only men who will attract no adverse notice. A man who is known to be a radical is very rarely given an original appointment. Presidents, deans, and heads of departments almost instinctively fight shy of him because they fear he will make trouble. If his radical tendencies crop out only after he has secured an established position in the academic organization, he will probably not be molested by his faculty superiors, though sometimes he is forced out by their failure to promote him. This whole process



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is, however, so natural and so unconscious that many of the principals in its operation are unaware of its existence.

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Loyalty to the university is almost never strong enough to stimulate morale with reference to conduct. The student group is not sufficiently united to have a definite moral code, much less to inspire obedience to one. Any one who knows American university life well can hardly imagine a student acting or refraining from action in a moral situation simply because he is a student. He might do so because of his family or fraternity ties, but not out of regard for the moral sentiment of the university group as a whole. These smaller groups are the chief source of the individual's morality, for they not only develop a morale with reference to their own particular aims and purposes, but they are the principal agents in building up loyalty to society as a whole. A child reared in a family with degenerate standards is almost certain to have little conception of his duty toward society. The service ideal is maintained largely through face-to-face groups which have at heart the best interests of a larger whole. Applying this to university life one might suppose that the various student organizations would develop in the men and women a general university morale in regard to conduct. This, however, seems to be seldom the case, probably because

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the various groups are not organized into any well integrated system.

The value of intimate groups in fostering morale in relation to conduct is well illustrated by the "honor system" in examinations. This system has had its chief success in relatively small, well established and, with regard to their student bodies, homogeneous colleges or universities. A definite and inclusive *esprit de corps*—not one built on athletics alone—is essential to its satisfactory working, and this our larger universities pretty generally lack. As between different classes in the same institution an honor system works better in the smaller sections. The reason for this appears to be simply that the moral sentiment is then stronger because the individual is more likely to identify himself with the smaller group and because a person hesitates to risk lowering himself in the eyes of those with whom he is on friendly terms. The frequent failure of the honor system in our colleges and universities cannot, however, be mainly attributed to the size of the groups involved. The principal thing is the absence of scholarly morale. Were students drawn closely together by the ties of intellectual comradeship such a thing as cheating on an examination would be no more tolerated than a breach of discipline in the army. Unfairness in carrying out one's individual share of the common task would receive the same censure as it does on the football field or the campus

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publications. Instead of that, there is sometimes a group spirit favoring unscrupulous conduct in examinations. At best the general principles inculcated in the home are left to exercise their remote influence without receiving added sanction from the immediate group.

Because of the lack of ethical morale in the student group as a whole, university rules relative to conduct cannot hope, without being regarded as highly formal and repressive, to enforce a standard much different from that which students acquire from their ordinary associations. It is difficult enough to enlist any student support for university rules regarding conduct, for there is not that feeling of unity with the institution which a willing obedience to a moral code requires; but it is next to impossible to enlist such support if the student moral sentiment developed in smaller groups does not approve the rules. Yet the latter is the situation in most of our universities. The authorities, in trying to enforce regulations such as those requiring that dances close at a certain hour and that chaperons be constantly present, are holding up a much stricter standard than that which students secure from their other associations. The trouble, of course, lies in the chasm between the old and the young at the present time. The fathers and mothers, brought up during the period when family discipline was more strict than now, feel that their sons and daughters

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should be made to abide by the same rules that they observed. The faculties, acting on their own convictions as members of the older generation and with the full approval of students' parents, enact such regulations. But the students have come under different influences. The movies, the automobile, and the "jazz" orchestra have combined to render traditional standards of conduct obsolete. The boys and girls are obtaining a greater chance for the expression of their unschooled impulses than did their parents. Living in the present, they are enjoying life tremendously and taking little thought of the future. They see no harm in "petting," for instance, and are quite tolerant of drinking. Since most of them manage to get along satisfactorily to themselves, they soon develop a great confidence in their own ability to regulate their lives and a corresponding scorn for the old-fashioned ideas of their parents. If they are accused of degrading the moral standards which formerly prevailed they will hotly deny it, saying that there has simply been a shift from an external, autocratic control to an internal, democratic one. They will tell you that modern young people have a moral code just as did their elders, the chief difference being that it has not yet achieved objective formulation in convention and the like. Though this is in some measure true, it is not the whole truth. Satisfactory adjustment cannot be made to the multifarious changes of the twen-

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tieth century in a few years. Before we can secure the firm establishment of a healthy self-discipline by our young people, we must pass through a period of temporary disorganization which in this case almost necessarily involves some degeneration.

Many students are of the opinion that if they participated in the making of regulations regarding conduct, matters would be better. They argue that a more democratic method of control would enlist more student support for whatever rules were laid down, and also that the regulations themselves, naturally being in greater harmony with the student point of view, would no longer seem repressive. In some institutions a large measure of such self-government is now permitted and, as far as I am able to learn, it is working satisfactorily enough. The faculties are very naturally hesitant to let the students have complete control. Feeling that youthful conduct is passing through an erratic period, they wish to keep a steady hand on the tiller.

It follows from what was said in the last chapter that churches and other religious organizations neither inspire much student loyalty to themselves nor serve as a powerful means of arousing morale in relation to society as a whole. It is only when the individual feels a religious enthusiasm that his standards of conduct are materially influenced; and student contacts with these groups are too rare and too formal to produce any such enthusiasm. How-

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ever, it is to be said that churches undoubtedly lend added sanction to the generally accepted social code and, though students are quite unconscious of the fact, help to prevent deviations from it.

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The morality so far discussed is the type involved in the simpler and more immediate human relationships. Such traits as honesty, sobriety, and chastity come under this head. But there is a less obvious sort of morale and one that is quite as important. I refer to that which exists when the interests and life work of individuals are in harmony with the aims of society as a whole. The result is a well unified and progressive social order which is characterized by the spirit of service. Although this sort of morale is also nourished chiefly by the ideals developed in small, face-to-face groups, not a little experience in larger social wholes is required for its mature development.

Undergraduates show a weakness with respect to this sort of morale which is surprising when the degree of their education and the relative breadth of their social contacts are considered. Their duty to the rest of society to act as leaders in the formation of public opinion and to pursue their own life work in a public-spirited manner is recognized if brought to their attention; but it is not enough in their minds to influence much their present actions

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or their future plans. Students do not mean to be selfish, but so keen do they feel that the competition of later life will be, and so lacking is our society in well organized occupation groups with socially valuable standards, that the young men and women are carried along on the general current of individualism. A student's chief concern for the future is the making of his own livelihood and he regards anything which does not contribute to this, whether it be conducting a business in accordance with the Golden Rule or taking an active part in politics, as decidedly secondary. Moreover, there has grown up in America a feeling among the well-to-do classes that politics are for that inferior species, the professional politician. They mix in affairs of government little more than to register not always well considered votes and to advance their own interests by bringing pressure to bear in the proper quarters. Vital political issues are not discussed about the average American dinner table, nor even to any great extent at the fashionable clubs. Quite naturally the sons and daughters of our merchants, bankers, and professional men achieve little political insight and acquire little political enthusiasm in their youth. And when they enter college there are so many fascinating diversions to occupy their time and consume their energies that such interest is not then developed. The result is that discussion of important national or local affairs is rare among

## Morale

undergraduates, knowledge of platforms meager, and political activity in the way of campaigning almost nonexistent.

Though the professional students appear to be quite as indifferent to politics as those in the colleges of liberal arts, they are often, especially the medical men, imbued with a greater sense than the latter of their obligation to serve society unselfishly in their after life. The group consciousness of each profession has made possible the building up of an ethics, in which the prospective members who are studying in universities share to some extent. The various occupations into which liberal arts students go after graduation do not enjoy the same degree of moral unity. The notion of service to society as a duty is therefore not so thoroughly implanted.

That adjustment of the individual to the whole of life which constitutes one's personal religion is closely akin to, if not identical with, morale in its widest and deepest sense. The person who has attained an adjustment both satisfying and lasting feels a oneness with the universe which enables him to rise superior to earthly trials. It is a lamentable fact that university men and women possess little of this, the highest type, of morale. They have arrived at a fairly adequate moral synthesis in regard to immediate personal relations; a quite inadequate one with respect to their relation to society in general; and they can hardly be said to have



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more than a start toward a universal synthesis. Life moves so rapidly for them and brings with it so many changing situations that they have been unable to gather its vital elements together into any orderly whole.

# Appendices



## APPENDIX I

Tables A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, and K were compiled by interviewing an unselected group of 500 men entering the University of Michigan in the fall of 1924.

TABLE A  
SIZE OF HOME COMMUNITY OF STUDENTS

Size Classification	Percentage of Students from Each	Percentage of Population of East - North - Central States Residing in Each
Open country .....	2.6	29.9
Towns of less than 2,500	13.8	9.3
Towns between 2,500 and 10,000 .....	14.8	9.6
Cities between 10,000 and 25,000 .....	18.0	7.2
Cities between 25,000 and 100,000 .....	20.2	12.5
Cities of more than 100,000 .....	30.6	31.5

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## TABLE B

### MAGAZINES READ REGULARLY BY ENTERING STUDENTS

Magazines placed in seven groups: fiction, literary and critical, informational, mechanical, business and professional, humor, outdoor and health.

	Per cent
Read none of any type regularly .....	6.0
Read one or more of one type regularly .....	41.0
Read one or more of two types regularly .....	45.8
Read one or more of three types regularly .....	7.0
Read one or more of four types regularly .....	.2
Read fiction only .....	34.8
Read at least one fiction magazine .....	81.0
Read any critical or literary magazine .....	12.2
Read any informational magazine .....	31.0
Read any mechanical magazine .....	16.2
Other figures obtained do not appear significant.	

## TABLE C

### BOOKS READ BY ENTERING STUDENTS IN YEAR PREVIOUS TO MATRICULATION

	Per cent
Read none .....	2.0
Read less than 10 .....	20.6
Read 10-19 .....	29.2
Median individual read approximately 18 books in the year.	
Read 20-29 .....	23.6
Read 30-69 .....	15.6
Read more than 70 .....	9.0
Read mostly fiction .....	45.4
Read mostly any other type (biography, science, etc.)	4.8
Reading quite widely distributed (fiction usually included) .....	47.8

# Appendices

TABLE D

## HOBBIES OF ENTERING STUDENTS

	Per cent
Have no hobbies .....	52.0
Mechanical and electrical .....	15.4
Music .....	20.4
Writing, dramatics, drawing, etc. ....	4.8

TABLE E

## SUMMER WORK OF ENTERING STUDENTS DURING PAST TWO YEARS

	Per cent
Hand labor both summers .....	36.2
Office work both summers .....	31.2
Skilled trade both summers .....	9.0
One of above each summer .....	4.6
Worked one summer only .....	8.0
Worked neither summer .....	11.0

TABLE F

## RELATION BETWEEN EDUCATION OF PARENTS AND NUMBER OF BOOKS READ BY ENTERING STUDENTS

College Graduates	Less than 10	10-19	20-29	30-69	More than 70
Neither parent (388 individuals)	Per cent 23.0	Per cent 27.8	Per cent 24.2	Per cent 16.0	Per cent 9.0
Father only (62 individuals)	24.2	40.3	14.5	12.9	8.1
Mother only (25 individuals)	16.0	24.0	36.0	20.0	4.0
Both (25 individuals)	20.0	28.0	24.0	12.0	16.0

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TABLE G

OCCUPATION OF PARENTS OF FIVE HUNDRED ENTERING STUDENTS

<i>Capitalists, or Usually Sympathetic with Capitalist Point of View</i>	<i>'Not Interested or Border Line Cases</i>	<i>Labor</i>
Architect ..... 1	Artist or musician ..... 2	Foreman ..... 6
Banker or broker.. 21	Boat officer ..... 2	Machine operative 16
Builder or con- tractor ..... 16	Chemist ..... 1	Motorman ..... 1
Comm. traveler..... 6	City official ..... 8	Outside labor ..... 8
Dray business ..... 1	Dentist ..... 6	Postal clerk ..... 3
Editor ..... 1	Doctor ..... 16	Railroad conductor 2
Engineer ..... 17	Farmer ..... 33	Railroad engineer.. 1
Factory manager.. 5	Fireman ..... 2	Store clerk ..... 12
Garage keeper ..... 3	Forester ..... 3	Unskilled factory hand ..... 4
Insurance agent... 8	Mail carrier ..... 4	
Jeweler ..... 1	Minister ..... 6	
Lawyer or judge.. 17	Parents deceased.. 30	
Lumberman ..... 7	Policeman ..... 1	
Manufacturer ..... 42	Teacher ..... 4	
Mine official..... 2	Trade (Baker, etc.) ..... 42	
Railroad official... 5	Undertaker ..... 2	
Real estate agent.. 19		
Retail merchant... 76		
Salesman ..... 15		
Store official ..... 4		
Wholesale dealer.. 18		
<hr/> TOTALS .....285	<hr/> 162	<hr/> 53

If the center group is disregarded the capitalist sympathizers are 84.3 per cent of the remainder. If the center group is divided in half between capital and labor, the capitalist sympathizers are 69.2 per cent of the whole five hundred.

# Appendices

TABLE H

## AUTOMOBILE INVESTMENT OF STUDENTS' FAMILIES ARRANGED ACCORDING TO SIZE OF COMMUNITY

(Reckoned on basis of current touring car prices)

Size Classification	Investment
Open country and places of less than 2,500 .....	\$ 676.92
Places of between 2,500 and 100,000 .....	1,200.00
Places of more than 100,000 .....	1,750.00

TABLE I

## AUTOMOBILE INVESTMENT OF FAMILIES OF ENTERING STUDENTS

(Reckoned on current touring car prices)

	Per cent
No automobiles .....	19.8
\$400-\$800 .....	18.2
\$800-\$2,200 .....	46.6
\$2,200 and up .....	15.4
Median investment .....	\$1,100
Average investment .....	1,342
Average investment per family in Michigan (reckoned on same basis) .....	535



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TABLE J

HOME OWNERSHIP OF FAMILIES OF ENTERING STUDENTS

	Per cent
Single house owned .....	79.4
Single house rented .....	13.4
Duplex owned .....	0.6
Duplex rented .....	1.4
Apartment .....	3.8
Hotel .....	1.0
Rents rooms .....	0.4

TABLE K

NUMBER OF SERVANTS IN HOMES OF ENTERING STUDENTS

	Per cent
None .....	83.2
One .....	10.2
Two .....	4.6
Three .....	1.6
Four .....	0.4

# Appendices

## TABLE L

PROPORTION OF UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN UNDERGRADUATES IN  
HOUSE GROUPS

Compiled from volumes of the *Michiganensian*, senior yearbook,  
and the university catalogues

Year	Number of Members	Number of Students in the Undergraduate Colleges	Per cent of Total Belonging to Groups
1906.....	630	2,809	22.1
1916.....	1,388	4,692 <sup>1</sup>	29.6
1926.....	2,597	7,591 <sup>1</sup>	34.2

<sup>1</sup> Exclusive of extramural student and nurses.

## TABLE M

STUDENT RECREATIONAL READING

From a study of an unselected group of 61 women and 71 men  
at the University of Michigan.

	Men	Women
Number of hours of recreational reading a week during school year .....	9.18	8.54
Hours devoted to magazines .....	2.48	2.75
Hours devoted to books .....	3.17	3.48
Hours devoted to newspapers .....	3.53	2.31

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TABLE M—Continued

## Magazine Reading

Students were asked to rank the given types of magazines according to the time they spent on them. A percentage of 100 would mean that all individuals read that type more than any other; a percentage of 0 would mean that none of them ever gave that type more than a cursory glance.

Men		Women	
Magazine reading is 27.7 per cent of men's total.		Magazine reading is 32.2 per cent of women's total.	
	Per cent		Per cent
Light fiction like <i>American</i> , <i>Saturday Evening Post</i> , etc. ....	75.4	Light fiction like <i>American</i> , <i>Saturday Evening Post</i> , etc. ....	75.0
Informational magazines like <i>Literary Digest</i> , <i>National Geographic</i> , etc. ....	58.5	Informational magazines like <i>Literary Digest</i> , <i>National Geographic</i> , etc. ....	52.7
Literary and critical magazines like <i>Atlantic</i> , <i>Century</i> , <i>Nation</i> , etc. ....	30.8	Women's magazines like <i>Ladies' Home Journal</i> , <i>Vogue</i> , etc. ....	43.4
Humor and moving picture magazines ..	25.4	Literary and critical magazines like <i>Atlantic</i> , <i>Century</i> , <i>Nation</i> , etc. ....	28.8
Scientific and mechanical magazines .....	25.4	Humor and moving picture magazines ..	13.6
Magazines like <i>Vanity Fair</i> , <i>Theatre</i> , <i>House Beautiful</i> , etc. ....	16.5	Magazines like <i>Vanity Fair</i> , <i>Theatre</i> , <i>House Beautiful</i> , etc. ....	13.6
Women's magazines like <i>Ladies' Home Journal</i> , <i>Vogue</i> , etc. ....	1.5	Scientific and mechanical magazines .....	6.6

## Favorite Magazines Mentioned More than Five Times

55 Men	43 Women	Total
<i>Saturday Evening Post</i> ..... 14	<i>American</i> ..... 12	<i>American</i> ..... 22
<i>American</i> ..... 10	<i>Saturday Evening Post</i> ..... 7	<i>Saturday Evening Post</i> ..... 21
<i>Cosmopolitan</i> ... 8	<i>Cosmopolitan</i> .... 6	<i>Cosmopolitan</i> .... 14
<i>Literary Digest</i> .. 7	<i>Literary Digest</i> .. 3	<i>Literary Digest</i> .. 10

# Appendices

TABLE M—*Continued*  
*Book Reading*

	Men	Women
Number of books read for recreation during school year .....	7.91	13.64
Quality of Books Read	Per cent	Per cent
A respectable number of excellent books, showing keen intellectual interest .....	15.2	14.0
A few excellent books or a larger number of good ones .....	28.8	26.0
A few good books or a larger number of ones of some worth .....	40.7	52.0
Few books of any real worth whatever ....	15.3	8.0

## *Newspaper Reading*

(Same system used as with magazines, above)

<i>Men</i>		<i>Women</i>	
Newspaper reading is 38.5 per cent of men's total.		Newspaper reading is 27.0 per cent of women's total.	
	Per cent		Per cent
Campus news .....	72.4	Campus news .....	82.9
Sports .....	69.4	Women's page and society .....	55.7
Political and general ..	54.1	Political and general ..	45.0
Editorials .....	38.5	Comic strips .....	40.4
Comic strips .....	37.9	Sports .....	35.7
Divorce, crime, and vice	18.2	Editorials .....	30.4
Financial and business	11.5	Divorce, crime, and vice	6.8
Women's page and society .....	1.8	Financial and business	3.6

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TABLE N

## RELATION BETWEEN EMPLOYMENT AND SCHOLARSHIP

Results of a study made at the University of Michigan in 1922-23. Scale: A-100, B-85, C-70, D-40, E-0.

	Per cent
University average for women .....	78.8
Average of 92 employed women .....	76.6
University average for men .....	71.2
Average of 22 men working less than two hours per day	72.6
Average of 442 men working two to three hours per day .....	70.3
Average of 94 men working more than three hours per day .....	69.8
Average of 63 orchestra men .....	64.4
Average of 621 employed men .....	69.9

## APPENDIX II

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